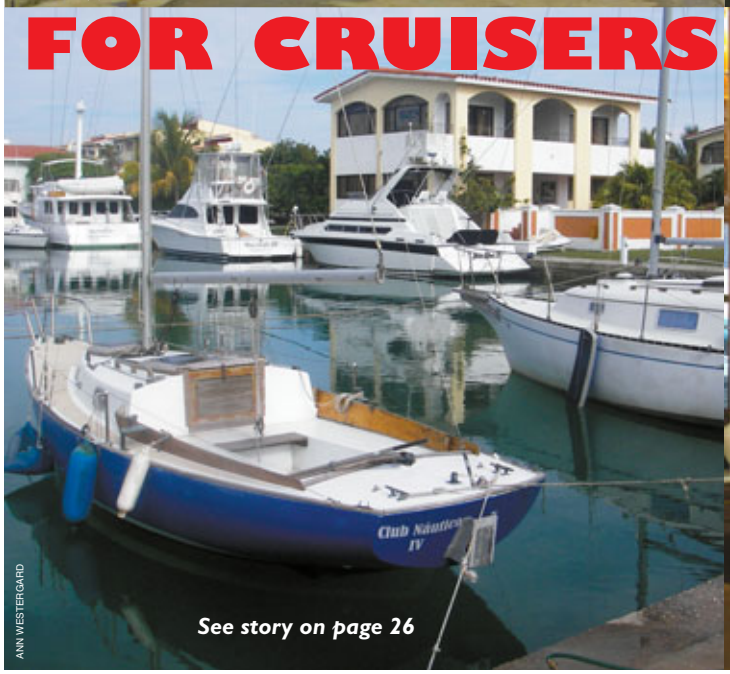
CARIBBEAN COMPASS
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JULY 2012 NO. 202
The Caribbean's Monthly Look at Sea & Shore





OLD HAVANA

FOR CRUISERS



ANN WESTERGARD

See story on page 26





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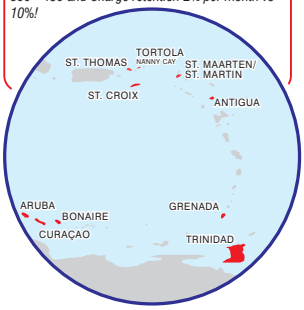
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Cover photos: Ann Westergard samples the incomparable sights of Old Havana, Cuba



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S/V Moonrise

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Info & Updates

St. Kitts & Nevis Reports Yachting Boom

The St. Christopher Air and Sea Ports Authority (SCASPA) Statistics Department reported that 267 yachts arrived in the first quarter of this year compared to 83 in the same period last year, an increase of 222 percent. Five hundred and ten passengers were aboard the 267 yachts arriving in the first three months of this year, a 40-percent increase compared to 363 for the same period in 2011.



Minister of Tourism and International Transport, Sen. the Hon. Richard Skerritt, said recently that the yachting landscape in St. Kitts & Nevis will change dramatically over the next few years.

"Yachting is a lucrative economic sector in other neighbouring Caribbean jurisdictions and has been identified as a key component of the strategy for future growth of our tourism development," Mr. Skerritt told a consultation aimed at establishing a maritime policy and action plan.

He expressed confidence that the private jet terminal now under construction at the Robert L. Bradshaw International Airport, together with the ongoing construction of new marina facilities at Christophe Harbour, and a further expansion of the Port Zante marina, coupled with the modernization of yacht entry and clearance administration, will help to significantly propel St. Kitts & Nevis forward in this sector.

"It is our Government's intention to build a positive environment for growth of the yachting sector, and for the overall development of our maritime and marine sectors. A Maritime Policy and Action Plan will be an important and timely step in the right direction," Minister Skerritt said.

Young Bequia Readers Receive Donation

Visiting sailors, both adult volunteers and young readers, have a favorite activity in Bequia: participating in the Bequia Reading Club. BRC founder Cheryl Johnson



Lavinia Gunn of the Mustique Charitable Trust, Cheryl Johnson of the Bequia Reading Club and Lucille Cozier of Action Bequia

reports that the Club held a ceremony on April 28th to thank the Mustique Charitable Trust for its donation of 102 books and assorted reading games. Approximately 60 children attended the ceremony held at the Fig Tree restaurant, the usual venue for Reading Club activities.

—Continued on next page

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Trinidad & Tobago
Soca Sails, Ltd.
Chaguaramas

photo: www.yachtshotsbvi.com

Jet Stream, Leopard 45

—Continued from previous page

Lavinia Gunn presented the donation and spoke on behalf of the Trust. She expressed her delight in giving the books to the Club and encouraged the children to read and to take care of the books and games. She complimented the children for continuing to attend the reading programme and assured them that they will all be better for it. She stressed the importance of reading and how it can expand the mind.

The gifts from the MCT came about as a result of a referral by Richard Roxburgh of the NGO Action Bequia. Lucille Cozier, treasurer of Action Bequia, also attended the ceremony, speaking on behalf of the organization. She recognized the work that volunteers — mainly cruisers — put into the Reading Club and she stressed the importance of reading to personal development. She emphasized the need for more volunteers, while encouraging the children to reach out in turn to the elderly, the needy and the disadvantaged. She also used the opportunity to highlight some of the projects of her organization, chief among which is the recently completed Belmont Walkway.

As an expression of their appreciation, some of the children sang two songs, one of which was Bill Withers' "Lean on Me".

BRC member Roella Bynoe offered closing remarks by thanking Louise and Martin Hurley for referring the BRC to Action Bequia's Richard Roxburgh, and to him for his subsequent referral of the BRC to the Mustique Charitable Trust. She also thanked Lavinia Gunn for her visit and her positive feedback to the Mustique Charitable Trust, which resulted in the gifts of books and games. She also thanked Action Bequia for the gift to the BRC of five new bookcases.

The Bequia Reading Club was established in 2006 to encourage reading among the children of Bequia. It holds a regular reading competition among Bequia's schools; plans are afoot for this year's competition.

Volunteers are always welcome to help with BRC activities. For more information contact Cheryl Johnson at cheripot@hotmail.com or on Bequia's morning VHF cruisers' net.

SMMTA Rep at International Yachting Seminar

St. Maarten Marine Trades Association board member Robbie Ferron represented the SMMTA and St. Maarten when attending the International Yachting Seminar held May 30th through June 1st in Martinique.

Robbie Ferron is a founding father of the recreational marine industry on St. Maarten and a strong advocate for sailing in Simpson Bay Lagoon. His experience



comes through his business — Budget Marine — which has ten outlets Caribbean wide, his work developing the St. Maarten Yacht Club as past Chairman of the Heineken Regatta Steering Committee, and as past president of the Caribbean Sailing Association.

The Seminar brought together national representatives of the private and public sector and also regional organizations with projects and programs related to yachting in the Eastern Caribbean. The St. Maarten Marine Trade Association was pleased to have this opportunity to liaise with its regional counterparts. Ferron shared his knowledge of the recreational marine industry by presenting a paper on "Economic Drivers of Marine Tourism in the Caribbean".

As the Seminar indicated, beyond the individual efforts of each island to promote itself, a common environment and cultural heritage might provide the ground for a joint approach based on shared values to collectively promote the Eastern Caribbean as a single destination to the yachting community.

For more information on the SMMTA visit www.smmta.com.

For a full report on the Seminar see story on page 18.

ABMA Advocates Yachting Legislation

The Antigua and Barbuda Marine Association is the national body that represents the marine industry and businesses affected by it, including hotels, restaurants and tourism-related businesses. The association seeks to deal with any issues affecting member businesses before they develop, and works with agencies across Antigua & Barbuda and the Caribbean to ensure that its members' needs are represented. As reported at antiguanice.com, the ABMA's annual general meeting in mid-May attracted 22 business representatives and event organizers in the yachting and marine industry.



CHRIS DOYLE

A number of issues in particular were raised and agreed to be priorities, particularly the provision of legislation that is relevant for yachting as opposed to merchant shipping. Over the past year there have been a number of positive meetings with Customs and Immigration to identify and deal with potential blockages. The members now feel that a drive to re-examine the legislation and simplify procedures is imperative if Antigua & Barbuda is to retain and expand its position in the vitally important yachting market. It has therefore elected a sub-committee to work on this as a major priority over the summer months.

—Continued on next page



—*Continued from previous page*

The ABMA's new board consists of Franklyn Braithwaite. Tracy Guerrero, Alison Sly-Adams, Pete Anthony, Stephen Samuel, Arougoo Adams, Deon Hector, Festus Isaac, Bobby Reis, Bradley Esty, Ashley Rhodes, Canter de Jager, Gerry Daniel and José Gillis.

For more information visit www.abma.ag.

New Fast Ferries for Vieques and Culebra

In June, two new high-speed ferries were added to the Fajardo, Vieques and Culebra routes in Puerto Rico.

Addressing the needs of passengers is the 151-foot catamaran *Big Cat Express*, capable of carrying 350 passengers. With a speed of up to 37 knots, *Big Cat Express* cuts the time of runs between Fajardo and Vieques or Culebra to about 30 minutes. Concentrating on cargo, the 160-foot *Sea Angel* can carry a deck load of 280 tons (equivalent to six 40-foot containers or between 12 to 18 cars) at up to 30 knots.

According to *Caribbean Business* magazine, the ferries were contracted from Puerto Rico Fast Ferries to help the Maritime Transport Authority address its spotty service, which has drawn protests from Vieques and Culebra residents, many of whom rely on ferry service for work, shopping and receiving medical care on the main island of Puerto Rico.

Eight Bells



CHRIS DOYLE

Fred Thomas was one of those folks who just love wooden boats. A wooden-boat owner himself, he helped establish the Sweethearts of the Caribbean race, held every year since 1977 to mark Valentine's Day in the BVI. Fred went on to organize a short-lived regatta for wooden boats in Trinidad. When he moved to Grenada, he brought the concept with him: the first Shipwrights and Friends Wooden Boat Regatta was held in 2000, based at the then-new Grenada Marine boatyard, and a Grenada Classic Yacht Regatta was launched in 2008.

Master of the lovely classic *Apollonia*, Fred (at right in photo) was the owner and operator of Shipwrights Ltd. in St. David's, Grenada, a company specializing in the restoration and refitting of fine yachts. He died on May 24th, in Grenada, after a brief hospitalization.

Hotspots

• A major rash of some 30 dinghy and outboard engine thefts plagued St. Martin in April and May. Although a suspect has reportedly been found with numerous outboards in his house, it still never hurts to chain and padlock your dinghy and outboard when ashore and hoist them when aboard at night.

• Noonsite reports that on June 10th two Dutch catamarans, *Pélagie* and *Bella Ciao*, were subject to an armed robbery while anchored in the Caño Guamal, a side stream of the Manamo River in Venezuela. No one was hurt.

The crews reported that at half past seven in the evening four men arrived in a speedboat. All four men boarded *Pelagie*, where the crews of both yachts were gathered, demanding money while holding the two couples at gunpoint. The robbers ransacked both boats, taking clothes, toiletries, laptops, cameras, a telephone and other electronic equipment.

This is the first reported incident of an armed robbery of cruising yachts on the Manamo River, a popular "natural getaway" for boaters in Trinidad.

For a full report visit www.noonsite.com/Members/sue/R2012-06-15-2.

Carriacou Photo Fest Postponed

The Carriacou Photo Festival, which was scheduled for June 8th through 10th, has been postponed to November 9th through 11th.

For more information visit www.carriacouphotofestival.org.

St. Lucia Eyes Island-Wide WiFi

As reported in the *Caribbean Journal*, St Lucia's government will launch a project this year aiming to make WiFi services available at any location on the island over the next two or three years, with an ultimate plan to make it free across the country. Barbados launched a similar program last year.

Cruisers' Site-ings

• Latitudes & Attitudes cruising magazine folds.
See www.latitude38.com/lectronic/lectronicday.lasso?date=2012-06-22#Story2

• www.greenantilles.com is a weblog about green topics in the Caribbean region. April's hard-hitting article about St. Maarten (www.greenantilles.com/2012/04) is just one example of the blog's must-reads.

Carriacou Children's Education Fund

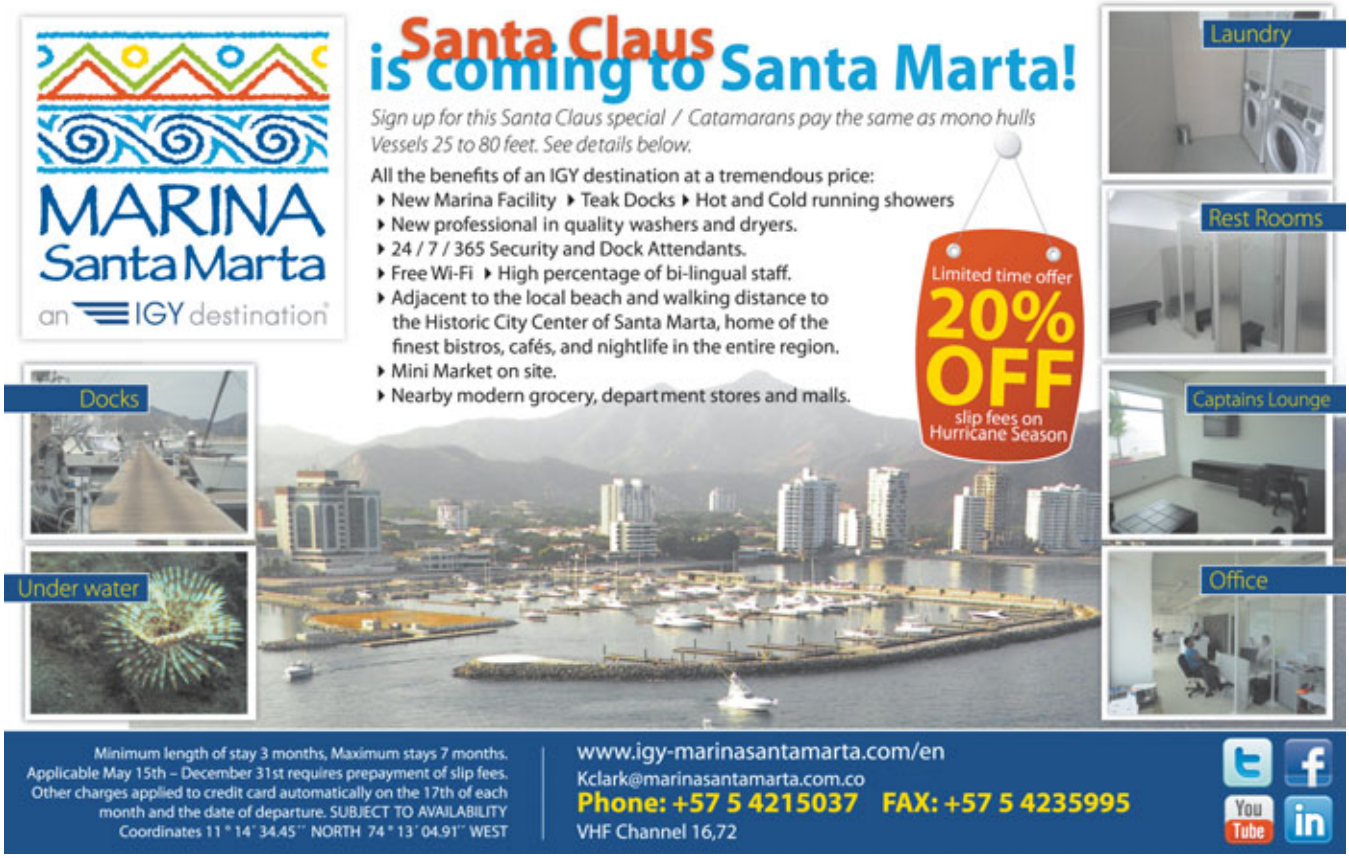
Help the Carriacou Children's Education Fund reach EC$200,000 in 13 years of providing school uniforms, supplies, free lunches, and scholarships to TA Marryshow Community College. Leave unneeded boat gear, household goods, clean used clothing for children and adults, school supplies and cash in the After Ours building at the head of Tyrrel Bay in Carriacou. Auction donations may be left with Georg or Conny at Arawak Divers in the same building, or, if Georg and Conny are diving, with Phyllis in the grocery store.

Major fundraising activities take place August 1st through 3rd, directly preceding Carriacou Regatta Festival. And, don't forget there is free wireless in Tyrrel Bay — just make a donation to CCEF.

For more information contact ccefinfo@gmail.com.

Welcome Aboard!

In this issue of *Caribbean Compass* we welcome new advertisers Marina Pescaderia of Puerto Rico, Tropical Trail Rides of Puerto Rico, Vela Uno of Puerto Rico, Villa del Mar Hau of Puerto Rico and Wholesale Yacht Parts of Grenada, all in the Market Place section, pages 42 through 45. Good to have you with us!





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Colombia's Marina Santa Marta Hosts Trade Fair

Colombia's Marina Santa Marta offers an ideal space, not only for yachts but also for large events. On May 18th, Marina Santa Marta was the venue for "Compre Colombiano", which attracted more than 300 businesspeople and brought together



the public and private sectors to promote the development of small and medium enterprise. Many vendors located in the marina took part, learning about governmental benefits and other entities and services that can help the growth, competitiveness and financing of their businesses, and thereby improve their services to marina guests.

For more information Marina Santa Marta see ad on page 6.

Panama's Red Frog Marina: 'Safe and Beautiful'

The Red Frog Marina team reports: The bay on the underbelly of Isla Bastimentos, Panama, where the Red Frog Beach Marina is located, is extremely well protected by mangroves. We have just finished a new security gate between the marina and the marina village. We are happy to report that we have had zero incidents of any crime or theft at the marina since opening two years ago.

We believe (and we are biased) that this is one of the safer, more beautiful marina destinations in the Caribbean — especially because Red Frog is outside the hurricane belt at nine degrees north.

The new bathhouse and laundry facility at the marina village now has its exterior finished. It will be completed this summer and will be a welcome amenity.

Please come and join us! If you plan to keep your vessel at Red Frog Beach Marina for hurricane season this summer, please make your reservation in advance as we are expecting to be full.

For more information see ad on page 23.

Specialty Watersports Insurance Available

Offshore Risk Management provides not only insurance for private yachts through its Better Boat Insurance, but also offers specialty insurance for parasailing, kiteboarding, scuba diving, windsurfing and other watersports.

For contact information see ad on page 11.

Amenities at Puerto Rico's Marina Pescaderia

New in 2011, Marina Pescaderia located in Porta Real contains 97 slips. Fourteen-foot depths at the entrance lead to ten-foot depths in the slips. The marina offers mooring balls and dock space for catamarans.

Facilities include a haul-out accommodating four-foot maximum draft, café, bar, chandlery, maintenance shop and dive shop. A "fishery" sells fresh fish from time to time and is available for marina patrons to cut and clean their catch. Natural light beams



into the bathroom and showers, which are appointed in solid wood and handsome tile work. Architect Paulette Medina's well-ordered space appointed with high quality furnishings is evident from the wooden decks strategically placed throughout the marina to the layout of the fish store, offices, retail and service shops. Services include gas, diesel, fresh water, pump out, WiFi, ice, limited on-site parking, valet, and gated security.

Recycled wood, fluorescent lamps, low-volume toilets, and solar lighting were built into the marina. Marina Pescaderia recycles used oil, cans, paper, glass and plastic. Environmentally friendly cleaning products are sold in the chandlery.

Fernando is friendly. He is vigorous and interested in the needs of his customers. His Timon General Store offers limited inventory but he assists yachties with acquiring provisions from outside his store. With no fuel dock available to private yachts in Mayaguez or Boquerón, Marina Pescaderia is becoming very popular.

Taxis are available from Porta Real. Mayaguez has car rentals.

See related article on page 23. For contact information see ad in the Market Place section, pages 42 through 45.

—Continued on next page

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Ondeck's Summer Maritime Training

While the main Caribbean sailing calendar is getting a little quieter, Ondeck Maritime Training in Antigua continues to deliver a wide range of courses over the summer.

They continue to welcome students from all over the Caribbean and worldwide to learn or improve their sailing skills for both professional and leisure purposes.



The crew in the photo have just successfully completed their Day Skipper shore-based and practical courses with Logan Knight, Ondeck's Antiguan Chief Instructor. They are, from right to left, David Benjamin, Ian King from St. Maarten, Nick Hughes from Barbados and Mick Corrigan, who works on a Superyacht.

The next STCW 95 Basic Safety Training will be in late July/early August and is essential for anyone looking to work on a commercial vessel of any kind.

For contact information see ad in the Market Place section, pages 42 through 45.

New Yacht Shipping Route: BC to USVI

As reported in The Triton (http://thetriton.com): Ft. Lauderdale-based Yacht Path Marine Group, a global yacht transport company, has added a new route connecting its Pacific Coast ports to the Caribbean. The new route will begin this fall.

"Mexico continues to be one of the most popular destinations for American boaters, but due to the random and unpredictable crime in parts of the country, many of our clients have decided to either stay close to home or seek alternative cruising destinations for this coming winter," said Kevin Cummings, operations director of Yacht Path.

Yacht Path's first sailing to St. Thomas will begin in October, initiating operations in Victoria, BC, with stops in Ensenada, LaPaz and/or Manzanillo, Mexico, before heading to Golfito, Costa Rica; St. Thomas and Ft. Lauderdale.

For more information visit www.yachtpath.com.

Crowley Expands Services in Puerto Rico and St. Kitts

Crowley Maritime Corporation's Caribbean logistics unit has nearly doubled the size of its distribution center in Puerto Rico with the acquisition of a second warehouse adjacent to the company's existing distribution center in Guaynabo. In addition to improving Crowley's warehousing capabilities, the expansion also enhances the company's ability to provide a wider suite of shipping and logistics services to customers on the island and also to those who ship between Puerto Rico, the US mainland and the Eastern and Western Caribbean. Crowley currently offers liner shipping to Puerto Rico from Jacksonville, Florida; Pennsauken, New Jersey, and more than 20 Caribbean islands.



Crowley is further expanding its Caribbean services to include consolidated ocean and air cargo lifts to St. Kitts & Nevis from several points within the US including its Miami distribution center. These new offerings will further enhance supply chain options for those shipping directly into the Leeward Islands. Hobson Enterprises, Crowley's local St. Kitts/Nevis representative for FCL liner shipments, will now also serve as the company's logistics agent, providing customers with a single point of contact for Crowley's full container load, less-than-container-load and air cargo services from the US. They will also be able to assist customers with other value-added services such as warehousing, cargo consolidation, distribution and more.

For more information visit www.crowley.com.

New Caribbean Business Magazine Launched

Kareem Guiste, founder and Managing Director of Finance, Accounting and Business Consulting Incorporated has launched a new business publication, *The Analyst*. The St. Lucian-based Dominican native describes his brainchild as "a business-oriented magazine that captures the essence of commercial activities across various sectors" in the Eastern Caribbean.

"It is a non-biased, cross industry, cross sector, OECS business magazine which aims to educate and inspire readers via informative and creatively written articles that appeal to readers of various disciplines, interests and fields," he said, adding that *The Analyst's* coverage spans sectors throughout the Eastern Caribbean, creating a portal for industry analysis, insight, and plans for future investments.

Copies of the magazine are currently available in Dominica, St. Lucia, Antigua, Grenada and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. The e-copy is available via analystmagazine.com/magazine in PDF and Flash versions, while the website can be accessed at analystmagazine.com.

Early Bird Discount for Antigua Charter Yacht Show 2012

Registration is now open for the Antigua Charter Yacht Show 2012. All yachts registering and paying by August 31st will receive a ten-percent discount off their show registration fee.

This long-running annual event is an opportunity for Caribbean crewed charter operators to display their boats to yacht charter brokers from around the world. The show will be held December 2nd through 8th at the Nelson's Dockyard Marina in English Harbour, and the Falmouth Harbour Marina and the Antigua Yacht Club Marina, both located in Falmouth Harbour. A shuttle service runs between the three marinas during show hours.

Register now at www.antiguayachtshow.com.





Caribbean Eco-News

Montserrat Reef's Snorkel Trail

Montserrat's first scientific artificial reef system was installed off Woodlands Beach between December 2010 and June 2011 and has been laid out as an easy-to-navigate, educational diving and snorkelling trail. This new habitat, made of "reef balls", has been attracting fish and other marine life since its installation. The reef supports both transplanted and naturally settling corals, sponges and marine plants. The



Montserrat Reef Project was one of the 2010 Montserrat Tourist Board Tourism Challenge Fund Recipients.

The aim of this project is two-fold: firstly, to build a new reef in the northern "safe" (from volcanic activity) area of Montserrat, replacing the lost or damaged reefs within the southern section of the island, by creating a natural-appearing reef which would be accessible from the beaches; and secondly, to save the coral habitat which may potentially be lost in the development of the Carrs Bay and Little Bay areas.

For more information contact the Montserrat Reef Project at (664) 496-REEF (7333) or montserrat.reef.project@gmail.com. To view the latest news, check out www.montserratreefproject.blogspot.com or the Montserrat Reef Project on Facebook.

Humpback Whales: 'Animals without Passports'

An exhibit called "Animals without Passports" that illustrates the humpback whales' migration between their North Atlantic feeding grounds and their Caribbean breeding grounds opened recently at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History in Brewster, Massachusetts. The exhibit highlights the various hazards humpback whales face as they cross ocean borders.

The exhibit also features information on the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary's Sister Sanctuaries Program. "Animals without Passports" is part of a sistering museum exchange with the Whale Museum of Samaná Bay in the Dominican Republic, which also has a sister sanctuary exhibit. The sister sanctuary relationship, established in 2006, between Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary (SBNMS) and Santuario de Mamíferos Marinos de la República Dominicana (SMMRD) marked a new chapter for the joint management of the endangered humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) in the North Atlantic.



The Sister Sanctuaries Program was the first international accord to protect an endangered marine mammal migratory species on both ends of its range — in its northern feeding and nursery grounds in SBNMS and its southern mating and calving grounds in SMMRD. In 2011, SBNMS signed a sister sanctuary agreement with the French Antilles Agoa Marine Mammal Sanctuary, expanding the program.

The organizers are hopeful that this exhibit will become part of a traveling exhibit in the Caribbean in the future. The exhibit was funded by the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation and will be up through December 2012.

For more information on the sister sanctuary program visit http://stellwagen.noaa.gov/sister/welcome.html.

Caribbean Manta Rays Studied by Satellite

Researchers from the Wildlife Conservation Society, the University of Exeter, and the Government of Mexico have published the first-ever satellite telemetry study on the manta ray, the world's largest ray species. The study was published on May 11th in the online journal *PLoS One*. The findings will help inform ecosystem-based management plans for the rays, which are in decline worldwide due to fishing and accidental capture.

The research team has produced the first published study on the use of satellite telemetry to track the open-ocean journeys of the world's largest ray, which can grow up to 25 feet in width. Researchers say the manta ray — listed as "vulnerable" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature — has become increasingly threatened by fishing and accidental capture and now needs more protection.

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"Almost nothing is known about the movements and ecological needs of the manta ray, one of the ocean's largest and least-known species," said Dr. Rachel Graham, lead author on the study and director of WCS's Gulf and Caribbean Sharks and Rays Program. "Our real-time data illuminate the previously unseen world of this mythic fish and will help to shape management and conservation strategies for this species."

The research team attached satellite transmitters to manta rays off the coast of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula over a 13-day period. The tracking devices were attached to the backs of six individuals — four females, one male, and one juvenile.

"The satellite tag data revealed that some of the rays traveled more than 1,100 kilometers during the study period," said Dr. Matthew Witt of the University of Exeter's Environment and Sustainability Institute. "The rays spent most of their time traversing coastal areas plentiful in zooplankton and fish eggs from spawning events."

The research team also found that the manta rays spent nearly all their time within Mexico's territorial waters (within 200 miles of the coastline), but only 11.5 percent of the locations gathered from the tagged rays occurred within marine protected areas. And the majority of ray locations were recorded in major shipping routes in the region; manta rays could be vulnerable to ship strikes.

In spite of its malevolent, bat-like appearance, the manta ray — sometimes referred to as the "devilfish" — is harmless to humans and lacks the stinger of the better-known stingray. The manta ray possesses the highest brain to body ratio of all sharks and rays and gives birth to live young, usually one or two pups every one or two years. Manta rays are apparently declining in the Caribbean and in other tropical regions of the world's oceans, in part because they are captured for shark bait and a demand for gill rakers (small, finger-like structures that filter out the ray's minute zooplankton prey) in the traditional Chinese medicinal trade.

Save the Sawfish Campaign

"Save the Sawfish" is an international campaign by the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation and the Florida Museum of Natural History aimed at preserving the magnificent creature threatened with extinction. "There's more reason now than ever to find out how many sawfish are left, what they do and how they fill their niche — and more importantly, to conserve them," Harvey says. "There's nothing else like this animal in our marine ecosystem, yet they are very few and far between. This is an adventurous effort."



Sawfish get their name from their "saws" — long, flat snouts edged with pairs of teeth. Similar to sharks in appearance, sawfish actually are bottom-dwelling rays that can grow to more than 20 feet long. Historically, sawfish occurred from the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico south through Brazil. Once common, they are now rare.

For more information visit www.savethesawfish.com.

Be a Seabird Skipper in the Grenadines!

Natalia Collier reports: Get up close and personal with the fascinating seabirds of the Caribbean by volunteering your vessel and crew for seabird research in the Grenadines with Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC), a non-profit organization registered in the US and St. Maarten.



EPIC recently completed a multi-year field research and outreach project that resulted in the *Seabird Breeding Atlas of the Lesser Antilles*, a groundbreaking catalog of seabird breeding colonies in the region. The book is available at Amazon, Kindle, and Create Space (https://www.createspace.com/3565696). The latter two return more royalties to EPIC to cover research expenses. The research was done by two sailors, Katharine and David Lowrie, who volunteered their boat, *Lista Light*, and crew time to travel to approximately 200 Lesser Antillean islands, twice. Sadly, the Lowries have decided to run the length of South America and won't be able to help out this time around! (*See related letter from Ellen Birrell in this month's Readers' Forum.)*

Now that the Atlas is out, EPIC is ready to take action on the conservation priorities highlighted in the book. One very important region for seabirds is the Grenadines. This is where *you* come in!

Two major seabird conservation issues in the Grenadines are invasive predators, such as rats, and unsustainable levels of seabird harvesting. To address these concerns, EPIC is planning a research voyage to 1) document which islands have invasive predators, and 2) determine what percentage of seabird eggs, chicks, and adults are being harvested by people. The Lowries found piles of heads of seabird chicks and traps with dead adult birds, and observed buckets of eggs being removed from colonies. By documenting harvest practices during the breeding season, we will gain valuable data to be used when working with communities, NGOs, and government to address this issue. This work will be complemented by separate and simultaneous social research and input from local communities.

Getting to the inhabited islands isn't a problem with the extensive ferry service available. However, since the researcher and assistant plan to visit several of the offshore islands inhabited only by wildlife several times over a season, getting to these remote isles is prohibitively expensive.

If you plan to be in the area during the periods December 2012 through April of 2013 or May through July of 2014, and would like to be part of an exciting Caribbean conservation project, please let us know. For example, if you'll be island-hopping down the chain, perhaps our crew could join you with a few stops at seabird colonies. Assisting with just one visit to offshore isles would be really helpful and your in-kind donation of transportation or housing may be tax-deductible in the United States.

To learn more about the Seabird Breeding Atlas project or EPIC's other work visit www.epicislands.org or Facebook.

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REGATTA NEWS

58 Sail in BVI Dinghy Championships

Participants from Trinidad, St. Lucia, Antigua, St. Maarten, St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John joined BVI sailors at the BVI Dinghy Championships, hosted by the Royal BVI Yacht Club and based out of Nanny Cay Marina, Tortola BVI, on May 5th and 6th. The total count of participants was 54 boats and 58 sailors.

Winds were light and shifty, making for challenging sailing conditions under overcast skies with repeated rain showers. Nonetheless, the race committee, chaired by Bob Phillips, was able to get off 11 races for most fleets, and seven for the advanced Opti fleet, over two days of racing.

The final results showed a tight level of competition with multiple ties.

The Laser Radial Class was won by St. Lucian Marcus Sweeny, followed by Rhone Findlay from St. Martin and, in third place, Hosea Williams of Antigua. There was only a three-point spread from first to third place after all races were run.

The Laser 4.7 is the smallest rig for young sailors just coming out of the Optimist dinghy and moving into Laser. The final result in this class was a three-way tie which was sorted out by allocating first place to BVI sailor Mollee Donovan, who scored four first place finishes, followed by her fellow BVI sailor Matthew Oliver with three firsts. In third place was Kelly-Ann Arrindell from Trinidad with two firsts.

The largest division was the Optimist dinghies. In the Beginner Fleet, the winner was Skye Erhart from St. John, followed by Jowan James of Tortola in second place, and Sean Hughes of St. Thomas in third.

The Blue Fleet, for sailors 11 and 12 years old, was won by Teddy Nicolosi from St. Thomas, followed by Rocco Falcone from Antigua and Chris Sharpless of St. Thomas. The Red Fleet, for sailors 13 to 15 years old, was won by BVI sailor Sam Morrell, in second place was Paige Clark from St. John, and Jason Putley of the BVI took third.

This regatta is the BVI qualifier for Opti Worlds and the top five BVI Optimist sailors qualified: Sam Morrell (first overall), Jason Putley (third overall), Rayne Duff (fourth overall), Thad Lettsome (seventh overall) and Sam Childs (12th overall).

Superb Sailing for Anguilla Regatta 2012

It was superb sailing with clear skies and winds ranging from 15 to 20 knots at the 10th Annual Anguilla Regatta, held May 11th through 13th, sponsored by the Anguilla Tourist Board. The Melges 24 *Team Coors Light*, skippered by Frits Bus, won top honors. Seventeen boats entered in the spinnaker, non-spinnaker and multi-hull yacht classes. This year saw the return of the A Class Anguilla Race Boats on the Sunday, in which *De Tree*, skippered by Errol Romney, won first place, followed by Alwin Richardson on *Real Deal* in second place, and in third, Eddie Hughes on *Sonic*.

While St. Barth's *Speedy Nemo*, with Raymond Magras at the Dufour's helm, handily stole Saturday's first Spinnaker Class race from *Team Coors Light* with only a one second lead on corrected time, the rest of the day it was *Kick 'em Jenny*, the Beneteau 36.7 skippered by Ian Hope-Ross, who put constant pressure on Fritz Bus's team, ending the series with a first place, two seconds and three thirds.

Bobby Velasquez topped the Non-Spinnaker Class with his Beneteau 45F5, *L'Esperance*, followed by Nico Cortlever's X-Yacht, *Nix*. Ben Jelic's new crew of young students from the Anguilla Youth Sailing School sailed the custom J/120, *Jaguar Island Water World*, to an adjudged third place overall after tying on points with St. Maarten Sailing School.

In the Multi-Hull Class, Robbie Ferron's Lagoon 410, *Katzenellenbogen*, ("cat's elbow", for those of us who don't speak Dutch) had a string of first-place finishes and controlled Saturday's racing, despite the ferocious battle fought between himself and the only other two skippers in the class: Erick Clement on the Multi Oceanique *Dauphin Telecom*, and Petro Jonker's DuToit 51, *Quality Time*. The Sunday's final race had exciting starts when *Dauphin Telecom* and *Quality Time* tried to squeeze out *Katzenellenbogen*. Ferron found a sliver of space and squeezed through the line with a clear start, but the other two multi-hulls' strategies failed them when they crossed the line seconds too early, resulting in a resounding win for *Katzenellenbogen*.

Next year's Anguilla Regatta will be held February 22nd through 24th.

For full results visit www.anguillaregatta.com.

Prizes Aplenty at Captain Oliver's 8th Annual Regatta

At Captain Oliver's 8th Annual Regatta, held the 19th and 20th of May in St. Martin, the crew of the Melges 24 *Budget Marine Gill*, skippered by Chris Marshall, became the "Most Worthy Boat" of the regatta and took home the main prize, ensuring their name goes down in perpetuity on the Captain Oliver's Memorial Trophy.

The fleet consisted of 22 boats in five classes, with a course counterclockwise around the island on the Saturday, and the Sunday's courses laid between Tintamarre and Pelican Rock for the cruising classes, and for the racing classes, an extended course rounding Rocher Rock. High winds and choppy seas caused cancellation of the Beach Cat Class.

Topping the Racing Monohull Class, *Budget Marine Gill* won a two-day stay at Captain Oliver's Resort for two people. Second place went to Bobby Velasquez's *L'Esperance*, a Beneteau 45F5, winning a handheld VHF radio and a watertight computer bag, sponsored by Budget Marine. Third prize, a US$100 gift certificate from Budget Marine, went to Raphael Magras' *Maelia*, an X34 design.

Petro Junker's DuToit 51, *Quality Time*, won the Racing Multihull Class along with a US$300 gift certificate from Bobby's Marina and a sports watch sponsored by Goldfinger. In second place was Patrick Turner's 43-year-old Newick design, *Tryst*, winning a gift certificate from FKG Rigging, and in third place Erick Clement's Multi Oceanique, *Dauphin Telecom*, won a $100 gift certificate from Budget Marine.



Budget Marine Gill *was named 'Most Worthy Boat' at Captain Oliver's Regatta 2012*

The Cruising Monohull class was won by Colin Percy's *Antares*, a Nonsuch 33, for a sports watch from Goldfinger and a gift certificate from Budget Marine. In second place was Garth Stein's *Moon Dance*, a Catalina 36, winning a sailor's watch from The Scuba Shop. For third place Gordon Robb's Charger 33, *Caribella*, won a $100 gift certificate from Budget Marine.

In the Cruising Multihull Class the winner was Luc Scheulen's Norman Cross 34, *Green Flash*, receiving a watch from Goldfinger and a Budget Marine gift certificate. Second place went to Marc Sillem's *Two Pigeons*, winning a gift certificate from Sint Maarten Sails. Third place was taken by Robbie Ferron's Lagoon 410, *Katzenellenbogen*, winning a dinner for two at Captain Oliver's Restaurant. (What, no Budget Marine gift certificate?)

The One-Design Class was won by Appie Stautenbeek on *Team Lagoon Marina* winning a powerboat course from Maritime School; in second place was *Island Turtle* winning a gift certificate from Scuba Shop; while third place went to Jose Villier aboard *V Wel O Ven*, winning a Budget Marine gift certificate.

But wait — there was more! A bottle of Moet & Chandon from Caribbean Liquors and Tobacco accompanied all first prizes.

For full results visit http://regatta.yolasite.com.

Barbados Finish for Panerai Transat Classique 2012

The second edition of the Panerai Transat Classique 2012, organized by the France-based Atlantic Yacht Club will leave Cascais, Portugal on December 2nd to end in Barbados in mid-to-late December.

Thirty-four classic and vintage yachts have already registered for the event. In Barbados, this elite fleet will be berthed in the Inner Basin of the historic Bridgetown Careenage.

A prestigious Special Edition timepiece dedicated to the Panerai Transat Classique will be the main prize for the overall winner.

For more information visit www.paneraitransatclassique.com.

Carriacou Regatta Festival Starts This Month

The Carriacou Regatta began in 1965 as a race for the island's swift and lovely decked cargo sloops. The event was established by J. Linton Rigg, a Jamaican-born yachtsman who settled on the island, in order to perpetuate the indigenous art of boatbuilding.

Since then, Carriacou Regatta has grown into a major Caribbean event, with races for yachts, open local sailboats, and Optimist dinghies in addition to the famous Carriacou sloops, plus numerous cultural and sporting events ashore. Donkey races, anyone?

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The Anguilla Youth Sailing School team raced Jaguar Island Water World *to third place in the Non-Spinnaker Class*

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The Carriacou Regatta celebrates its 47th anniversary from July 29th through August 6th.



TINA NASH

Join the slippery sloops at Carriacou Regatta this month! For information contact ccouregatta@spiceisle.com

For more information see ad on this page.

Caribbean Regattas' 2013 Dates Adjusted to Avoid Crowded Calendar

The Caribbean Sailing Association reports that several of the premiere Caribbean regattas have agreed to adjust their dates in 2013 to avoid crowding the racing calendar. The race directors will meet again in October to discuss this new schedule and work on a permanent solution that will run from 2014 onward.

The yacht racing circuit in the region has grown over the years, with new regattas being added and smaller events developing to an international level. This resulted in a packed race calendar, especially during March and April, with some conflicting dates.

Peter Holmberg of the Caribbean Sailing Association spearheaded this effort in an attempt to help both the visiting sailors and the events. "The regatta directors were asked to consider the overall benefits, and not just the success of their individual event. The spirit of cooperation from everyone



WILFRED DEDERER

was greatly appreciated. With these adjustments, the entire Caribbean gains — the individual regattas and sponsors gain, the island economies gain, and the sport of sailing gains."

Some of the 2013 regatta dates will now be:

• Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race, January 21st (www.mountgay-rumroundbarbadosrace.com)

• The Super Yacht Challenge Antigua, January 25th through 27th (http://the-superyachtchallenge.com)

• Puerto Rico Heineken Intl Regatta, February 16th through 18th (www.prheinekenregatta.com)

• RORC Caribbean 600, February 18th (http://caribbean600.rorc.org)

• St. Maarten Heineken Regatta, March 1st through 3rd (www.heineken-regatta.com)

• Caribbean Super Yacht Regatta Virgin Gorda, TBD (www.supery-achtregattaandrendezvous.com)

• International Rolex Regatta, St. Thomas, March 22nd through 24th (www.rolexcupregatta.com/index2.php)

• BVI Spring Regatta and Sailing Festival, March 25th through 31st (www.bvispringregatta.org/bvi)

• St. Barths Bucket Regatta, March 28th through 31st (www.bucketregat-tas.com/stbarths/index.html)

• Les Voiles de St. Barth, April 8th through 13th (www.lesvoilesdesaint-barth.com/site/us)

• Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta, April 18th through 23rd (www.antiguaclassics.com)

• Antigua Sailing Week, April 28th through May 3rd (www.sailingweek.com/v3/index.php)

Other 2013 events will include:

• Club Náutico de San Juan International Regatta, February 1st through 3rd (www.nauticodesanjuan.com/sailingprogram/regatta_int.htm)

• Bequia Heineken Easter Regatta, March 28th through April 1st (www.begos.com/easterregatta)

• Invitational St. Maarten-St. Martin Classic Yacht Regatta, March 29th through 31st (www.ClassicRegatta.com)

• 505 Worlds 2013, Barbados, April 22nd to May 3rd (www.int505.org)

• Mount Gay Rum Barbados Regatta 2013, Barbados, May 16-19, 2013

Stay tuned to Regatta News and our Compass monthly calendar of events for more regatta dates.

CARRIACOU REGATTA 2012

JULY 29TH - AUGUST 06TH



EXPERIENCE A WEALTH OF SAILING AND FUN! BE THERE!

THINKING BIG IN CUBA

by Sally Erdle

On our way from the José Martí International Airport, the taxi driver took a detour to drop a friend off at his apartment. Continuing on from there to the marina we cruised through a particularly quiet neighborhood. "Este es una zona congelada," (this is a frozen zone) he explained, "Fidel lives here."

Since the 1959 Revolution and the US's subsequent embargo, Cuba's yachting scene has been something of a "frozen zone", too. However, thanks to the ongoing efforts of the Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba and its Commodore, José Miguel Diaz Escrich, and in hopes of the embargo being lifted, a thaw might be coming.

Representatives of strategic facets of the international yachting sector met in Cuba on May 19th at the Meliá Habana hotel, where recreational boating in Cuba, its past, present and — yes — its future, was the focus of a workshop organized by HIYC. On everyone's mind was the potential number of increased visitors, particularly US-flagged yachts, that is expected to arrive as restrictions affecting US citizens' travel to their nearest Caribbean neighbor are eased. A study done by the University of Florida estimates that once the restrictions on Americans' travel to Cuba are suspended, some 60,000 or 65,000 recreational boats, both sail and power, will visit the island every year.

The largest Caribbean island, Cuba actually comprises an archipelago of more than 4,000 islands, cays and islets offering more than 200 bays, gulfs, coves and inlets that are navigable by boat. According to Cuban authorities, some 70 percent of entrance channels provide deep and easy access to potential anchorages and marinas.

Eleven presentations were made at the workshop, which was also attended by Cubans in relevant governmental departments, members of HIYC and the local media. Yachting sector representatives from Florida had also planned to attend, but were denied permission by the US Department of the Treasury days before the event.

Thinking Marinas

Marinas, of course, are a critical factor in any yachting destination. Four of the workshop's presentations focused on marina development: "The Evaluation of Probable Sites for Marinas and Nautical Bases in Cuba" by Angel Herrera Corbal, Marina and Commercial Port Specialist in the Physical Planning Institute of Cuba; "The Importance of Marina Development" by James Beaver, Chief Operating Officer of Camper & Nicholsons Marinas; "Trends in Marina Design and Development" by Peter Jansen, Secretary of the International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA) Marinas Group; and "Standards for Certification of Marinas" by Ulrich Heinemann, Managing Director of the International Marina Certification Institute.

Angel Herrera described a network of sites around the Cuban coast, reflecting both proposed and existing marinas. Cuba currently has slightly more than 700 slips distributed among eight marinas and ten smaller "nautical bases" (these are generally facilities for the Cuban fleet that provides services for resort-based tourists). Herrera said that about a fifth of the current marina capacity in Cuba is used by local tourism/watersports providers. The remaining berths are available for visiting foreign yachts; however, many of these installations are inadequate for international yacht traffic.

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HAIDI PAPPADAKIS



Getting ready. Cuban officials and yacht club members listened intently to presentations by international yacht-tourism experts at the recent workshop in Havana



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Herrera related that the Cuban government has analyzed the potential impact of an influx of primarily US-flagged yachts on its limited marina-berth capacity, estimating the levels of investment, upgrades and new development necessary to properly assimilate this wave. A projected national system of 30 marinas and 19 nautical bases comprising more than 10,000 slips is the long-range goal, and it is proposed that 4,000 new slips be available by 2022. It is also recommended that, over the next three years, upgrades be made to existing marinas and their berths, to technical and other services for yachts and yachtsmen, and to navigational aids, etcetera, thus improving Cuba's reputation among the international boating community.

Camper & Nicholsons has specialized in marina development for more than 40 years and operates marinas in the Caribbean, Mediterranean and Middle East. James Beaver told the workshop that an estimated 200 people — 27 direct marina employees plus those involved in ancillary businesses and jobs — make a living from every 170 marina slips. This statistic should strike a spark in Cuba where, at the beginning of this year, the government began allowing more private-sector jobs and issued thousands of licenses for citizens to start their own businesses.



The Cuban government has planned an ambitious national network of marinas and nautical bases around the Caribbean's largest island

ICOMIA's Peter Jansen, a waterfront development architect, stressed the importance of management training, building on existing best practices, and "clean marinas". He also highlighted the advantages of re-using existing infrastructure and the wisdom of offering different types of boaters a variety of marina types in appropriate locations, and discussed how multi-use marinas can be beneficially integrated into the life of the host community.

Ulrich Heinemann explained his organization's quality- and service-rating Blue Star system for marinas worldwide, similar to the system used by hotels, restaurants and campgrounds. Currently no marinas in the Caribbean have been rated by the International Marina Certification Institute, so Cuba could possibly be a pioneer in this regard.

Thinking Cruisers

Speaking on the cruising yacht sector were *Caribbean Compass* editor, Sally Erdle, and *Compass* contributor Ann Westergard, who, respectively, gave an overview of "Cruising Yachts in the Caribbean: A Growing Trend" and insight into "The Emerging Phenomenon of Part-Time Cruising: Making it Work for Boat and Host".

Three key trends in the Caribbean cruising yacht sector were outlined by Sally Erdle: that cruising yachts visiting the Caribbean are increasing in number (despite a recession dip), size and technological sophistication; that the influx of cruising yachts has created an expanding demand for a wide range of facilities and services; and that the cruising yacht visitors' desire for facilities and services is balanced by their growing awareness of the need to respect the natural environment and culture of the communities they visit.

A circumnavigator and long-time liveaboard cruiser, Ann Westergard gave a first-hand account of the requirements of the growing number of "commuter cruisers" — those who sail in the Caribbean for a few months of the year and then look for a safe place, either afloat or hauled out, to store their boat for the months that they spend in other parts of the world. She detailed the numerous types of goods, materials, labor and services — in addition to long-term storage — that commuter cruisers want. "If you can provide a home away from home for the cruising community, and build your reputation as a friendly, helpful, safe and secure place," she said, "then boaters will come to you."

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More Thoughts

Voicing the concerns of the charter industry, Loic Bonnett, President of Dream Yacht Charter, spoke about "The Charter Boat Business in the Caribbean". There are at present fewer than 30 charter boats (of all companies) based in Cuba, compared with, for example, more than 300 based at Le Marin, Martinique. But Loic gave a hint of Cuba's chartering potential by noting that Dream Yacht Charter's Cuban fleet, albeit small, has the highest occupancy rate of all the company's bases worldwide. "Real luxury today," he said, "is being involved with nature and human relationships." Cuba's



HAIDI PAPPADAKIS

Ulrich Heinemann stressed the importance of recognized service standards for international-quality marinas

"being late" in the charter business is not a handicap but an advantage, he noted, as a fledgling industry can learn from others' mistakes. He called for one Cuban government agency to deal with yachting, as the current bureaucracy can be frustratingly complex.

Cuba is world famous for billfish and the sportsfishing sector was represented by Julio Baisre, Assistant Manager of the Cuban National Aquarium, speaking on "The Potential of Recreational Fishing and Importance of Environmental Protection". Cuba has long recognized that sustainability depends on protection. The numerous marine protected areas in Cuba include the Jardines de la Reina, an 850-square-mile marine reserve that is the biggest in the Caribbean.

Nicolás Goschenko Spokoiski, President of Venezuela's National Organization of Aquatic Rescue (ONSA), presented a detailed examination of "The Organization of a Marine Search and Rescue Group", and spoke about boating safety and licensing issues.

"The History of Cuban Hydrography and the Development of Nautical Charts for Yachts" was presented by Iván Kárel Sosa Chongo. As well as print-on-demand charts, the Cuban agency Edimar produces seven accurate and up-to-date spiral-bound albums of yacht charts covering the island's various cruising areas, which are available at El Navio bookstore in Havana (see "Old Havana for Cruisers" on page 26) or on-line at www.bluewaterweb.com. The charts are also available in electronic formats.

Thinking Nautical Heritage

José Miguel Diaz Escrich, Commodore of the Hemingway International Yacht Club of Cuba and a well-known figure in international yachting and sportsfishing circles, opened the workshop with an eloquent recitation of Cuba's impressive sailing and watersports traditions, illustrating that recreational boating on this island is not a foreign or an elitist activity, but rather has been a part of Cubans' heritage for generations, albeit one that waned in the decades after the 1959 Revolution.

Commodore Escrich made a passionate appeal for Cubans to re-embrace this part of their patrimony, saying, "In past and present generations of Cubans there have been people who love the sea and sailing and, above all, people with the clear vision of our nation bonded to the sea, with the sole objective of contributing to a better Cuba."

Giving a capsule history of a rich legacy, he related that the first rowing competitions in Cuba took place at the end of the 19th century. Although fishing had always been a popular free-time activity among Cubans, in the first decades of the 20th century an intense socialization of sportsfishing was seen, and clubs, competitions, publications and tackle shops arose. The first blue marlin recorded as caught in Cuba was landed on the Havana waterfront in 1924. In the 1930s, the golden age of sportsfishing began on Cuba's northwest coast, with aficionados from Cuba and North America pioneering the use of rod and reel. The first billfish tournament in Cuba was organized by the Santa Cruz Yacht Club in 1938. In 1950, the Havana International Yacht Club and the National Tourism Development Corporation organized the first international Hemingway Billfish Tournament, which, along with many other tournaments in Cuba, continues today.

The Havana Yacht Club was founded in 1886, and the island's first sailboat race was held a year later. The club's commodore, Rafael Posso, a Cuban, dedicated more than 60 years of his life to the development of yachting.

During the 1940s, the lack of berthing facilities for recreational boats in the whole country became critical. What few docks existed belonged to private associations and could only be accessed by members and their invited guests. In the late '40s, construction began on the new Club Náutico Internacional facility in Old Havana, providing better services to visiting yachtsmen. The dock was long enough for a score or more of yachts of various sizes, eliminating the hassles that confronted yachtsmen in the commercial port of Havana. In a building over the dock were a bar and restaurant, water and electricity services, storage, showers and more. Yachts arriving from overseas could proceed directly to the dock, where a Customs officer and an Immigration agent would clear them in a matter of minutes.

In the middle of the '50s, work began on the dredging and construction of what we now know as Marina Hemingway, west of Havana, and Dársena de Varadero, to the east, which greatly increased mooring capacity for yachts cruising this part of the north coast of Cuba.

Among many other notable yachting events in Cuba's history were:

- the Miami-to-Havana yacht race held in 1922,
- the International Star Class Midwinter Championships, held in Cuba 25 times starting in 1926,
- the Star World Championships held in Havana in 1946, 1955 and 1957,
- the St. Petersburg-to-Havana Race (the forerunner of the SORC), which began in 1930 and ran a further 24 times,
- Havana-to-Spain races that were held in 1951 and 1955,
- races from Key West, Sarasota, Fort Lauderdale and New Orleans that took place from the 1970s through the 1990s,
- the Clipper Round-the-World Race, which has called at Cuba four times,
- the Transcaraïbes des Passionnées Rally, which has finished at Cuba 11 times.

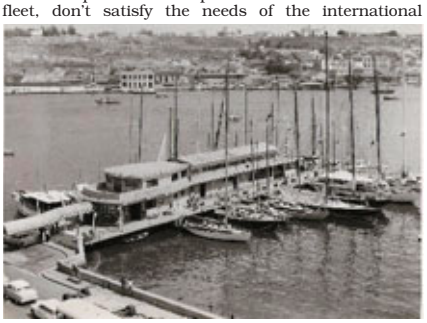
As Commodore Escrich said, "With more than 3,000 miles of coastline, how can we look anywhere but toward the sea?"

Thinking About Tomorrow

Commodore Escrich, while emphasizing that Cuba has the natural conditions for yachting tourism, stated clearly that in addition to providing facilities for boats and their crews Cuba must provide a legal system that facilitates, as well as regulates, yacht tourism. He commented that, legislatively, foreign yachtsmen were first recognized in 1935 via a decree that allowed them to freely cruise Cuban waters under an endlessly renewable 30-day permit from a port captain. Cuban boaters, on the other hand, could only sail in their homeport waters and had to abide by merchant marine laws, although exempt from log, cargo manifest, passenger list and bill-of-lading requirements. Since then there has been no official regulation pertaining to yachtsmen.

"In reality", said Commodore Escrich, "we can't count on the current Cuban legislation with regard to the necessities of cruising in the waters that surround our island, when considering the increasing number of international yachts that have visited us in recent years."

He also reiterated that the services now offered by Cuba's marinas and nautical bases are limited and, while adequate for the operation of the local tourist fleet, don't satisfy the needs of the international



Now a bar and restaurant, in 1953 the Club Náutico Internacional in Old Havana was surrounded by visiting yachts

yachtsmen. This affects the foreign charter fleets as well as visiting private boats. Workshop presenters repeatedly suggested that Cuban marinas provide WiFi. This will be a particular challenge in a country where today, internet connections, if available, are slow and WiFi is virtually unobtainable.

But challenges can be overcome. Commodore Escrich stated, "Today, the country has highly prepared institutions and professionals in the various spheres that pertain to the maritime sector and who possess knowledge and experience of immense value."

Meanwhile, Caribbean Tourism Organisation statistics show that during the last decade there has been a shift in numbers of all types of visitors from English-speaking Caribbean destinations to Spanish-speaking ones. And, despite the US travel restrictions, Cuba is reporting its biggest tourism boom since the revolution. The combination of nature and culture, the charisma of the Cuban people and the country's yacht-safety reputation, all point toward the high potential of yachting in the diversification of the Cuban tourism offering.

That creaking sound you hear is a big door slowly opening, a thorny path being cleared, ice thawing.



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PARTY TIME!

Hemingway's Yacht Club's 20th Anniversary Fête



The workshop on Nautical Recreation in Cuba: Past, Present and Future was just one component of Hemingway International Yacht Club's extended 20th Anniversary celebrations. Activities in Cuba spanning April and early May included a 26-mile yacht race; a fishing tournament; jet-ski, kayak, canoe and paddleboard races; plus an international hydrography workshop. Two days after the workshop, the string of events culminated in a gala awards ceremony and evening celebration at the club's spiffy headquarters, located in Cuba's best-known yachting facility, Marina Hemingway.



HAIDI PAPPADAKIS

Well-wishers from around the world congratulated Commodore Escrich, third from left, at Hemingway International Yacht Club's 20th Anniversary gala

Club members, young local watersports stars, workshop participants, visiting yachtspeople and other well-wishers came together to see commemorative plaques presented by HIYC to numerous supporters of its ongoing work in the development of recreational boating in Cuba and worldwide. In turn, the club's tireless Commodore was honored with speeches and anniversary mementoes by an impressive array of international figures including Jesus Peiro Artal, of the International Federation of Maritime and Naval Leagues; Peter Jansen, of the Marinas Group of the International Council of Marine Industry Associations; Rob Kramer, of the International Game Fish Association; Eugene Evans, representing the Prime Minister of the Cayman Islands; Nicolas Pappadakis, of the Maritime Authority of the Cayman Islands; Francisco Quiroga, of the European Fraternity of Sailing; José Manuel Fernández Gómez, of the Galician Association of Nautical Activities; Andrew Hare of the Knysna Yacht Club of South Africa; Bruce Feldhammer of the Mariposa Hunters Point Yacht Club of California; Iván Sosa Chongo, of Edimar Agency (editors of the Cuban Nautical Charts); and Nicolás Goschenko Spokoiski, of Venezuela's National Organization of Aquatic Rescue.

The awards presentations were followed by live music, dancing and socializing, delicious canapés, and of course excellent Cuban rum drinks.

At this major waypoint for HIYC, Commodore Escrich says, "With emphasis on past, present and future generations, this club continues to work for the revival and development of Cuba's nautical tradition and culture."

He adds, "We are committed to encouraging boating education. The soul and spirit of the club includes the will to develop international relations with other associations worldwide. Everyone is welcome to sail here and will have our assistance and support. The club is strengthening its role in support of the international cruising community and will coordinate with the authorities in emergencies and act as a mediator if there is conflict with a business."

HIYC is not only helping Cuba prepare for "the American wave", but the next 20 years of this hard-working club's efforts to develop recreational nautical activities in Cuba and to strengthen its ties with the international community of boaters are sure to have a profound effect on the entire Caribbean yachting sector.

For more information visit www.hemingwayyachtclub.org.





ANN WESTERGARD (3)

Plaques were presented to colaboradores in recognition of their contributions to the club; the event drew an appreciative crowd



Eastern Caribbean Yachting Seminar Held in Martinique

by John Duffy

An International Yachting Seminar was held from May 30th through June 1st in Martinique.

The Caribbean Marine Association (CMA) sent six representatives to attend the event, which was organized by the French Customs administration and the Centre d'Etude et de Recherche en Economie, Gestion, Modélisation et Informatique Appliquée, and sponsored by the Université des Antilles et de la Guyane. As might be expected, the French islands were well represented with delegates from French Customs, French Naval and marine safety units, and French yachting interests from Martinique, Guadeloupe, St. Barths and St. Martin. The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Secretariat sent its Programme Officer, Dr. Lorraine Nicholas. Also attending were Customs officers from Antigua & Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Grenada, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. The Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council (CCLEC) was represented by Albert Sandy, St. Lucia's Deputy Comptroller of Customs. The private sector in the English-speaking territories was also well represented with delegates from Antigua & Barbuda, Grenada, St. Maarten, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines and Trinidad & Tobago. Delegates arrived on May 29th and were greeted at a cocktail party by Jean-Claude Garric from French Customs and Nathalie Petit-Charles from the Centre d'Etude et de Recherche en Economie, Gestion, Modélisation et Informatique Appliquée.

The two-and-a-half-day seminar was separated into five segments, the first four dealing with key subjects relating to Caribbean yachting and a final session drawing conclusions from the preceding two days' discussions. Three of the four subjects broadly addressed the economic aspects of Caribbean yachting while one addressed safety and security (which, while interesting, could have been held in an alternative forum leaving the seminar to concentrate solely on economic factors).

The subjects addressed were:

Session 1: Regulations Relating to Yachting
Session 2: Yachting Security and Safety
Session 3: Taxes and Fees Relating to Yachting Activities
Session 4: Yachting and Economic Development

There were three to six speakers on each subject. Also, for each segment, two representatives, one French speaking and one English speaking, were selected to prepare summaries for the final session. Jean-Claude Garric from French Customs acted as the facilitator and all speakers' presentations were simultaneously translated into either English or French.

The first session, on regulations, was addressed by Laurent Colibeau from the Clearance Supervision Unit of the French Coast Guard, followed by Ernest Brin, Director of St. Barths' Port Authority and Dean Fahie from the British Virgin Islands Customs Department. On behalf of CCLEC, Albert Sandy gave an enlightened speech stressing the need for simplification and harmonization.

Jean-Marc Cevaer, Deputy Director of the (French) Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre was due to open the second session, which dealt with yachting security and safety. His subject was search, rescue and vessel-theft tracking. Unfortunately, he was unavailable but his paper was read by Coast Guard Officer Jean-Eudes Seychelles, who went on to present his own subject on illicit trafficking — be it in drugs, contraband or people. President of the Caribbean Marine Association, John Duffy, stepped a bit wide of the strict subject limits to discuss the manner in which security interests can, and often do, clash with the freedom of movement of yachts.



Public and private sector representatives from around the Eastern Caribbean met to discuss four key issues in the development of yachting — and to draw some conclusions

The Session 3 segment on taxes and fees was divided into two sub-sections, one a discussion on the fee categories and their amounts, and the other on tax policy. Glenn Jean-Joseph, manager of the marina at Le Marin, Martinique, spoke on the fee structure as it related to his marina, and CMA Vice-President Bob Hathaway gave an illuminating illustration of the fee structure in the various marinas within the OECS and other English-speaking territories. The results of his investigations were somewhat surprising (see sidebar). Tax policy was explained from the French point of view of a naval officer working within the French Coast Guard, and a version of an English territory's approach to taxation was given by Monique Stewart, a Customs officer from St. Vincent & the Grenadines.

For the final segment there were six speakers, commencing with Elodie Olive from the French Customs Caribbean Headquarters speaking on the subject of the way the yachting industry presents itself on the web. She was followed by Robbie Ferron, from St. Maarten, whose presentation could be summed up by his comment that all yachts visiting the Caribbean see it as a single entity rather than a multiplicity of administrations. Douglas Rapier of Martinique explained the importance of the growing mega-yacht sector and the need to recognize the diverseness of yachting. Dr. Lorraine Nicholas presented the OECS's policy on yachting tourism, and Yvonne Tritz gave an impassioned speech on the value of yachting tourism to Martinique and the other French Caribbean islands. The session was concluded by Erik Blommestein, from Trinidad & Tobago, stressing the need for planning and better policy making.

Each speaker invited questions at the end of their speeches and the content of some presentations led to lively debates. With sessions starting as early as 8:00AM and some delegates preparing for the next day as late as midnight, anyone who thought they were visiting an idyllic French island for good food, rest and relaxation must have been sadly disappointed — although the good food was there in abundance!

Regulations Relating to Yachting

On the Saturday morning, Jean-Eudes Seychelles summarized the first session, which related to clearance regulations. Among the recommendations was a suggestion for the setting up of a small steering committee for the introduction of an electronic pre-arrival notification system covering the needs of Customs, Immigration and Port Authority. The system should have the ability to receive on-line payment of fees. It should also be a requirement of the system that it provide data and statistics for use by private and public sectors, tourism in particular, for the promotion of Caribbean yachting. It was considered essential that the steering committee operate under the auspices of CCLEC, which represents 38 Caribbean nations.

—Continued on next page



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Yachting Security and Safety

Bob Hathaway, crediting his French counterpart with all the work, presented the summary of the second session, which addressed yachting security and safety. The main conclusions were the need for better communications with yachts to enable easier and swifter responses in the case of emergency and a recommendation that officials, authorities and communities be made more aware of being welcoming to yachting visitors. It was suggested that regional customer-service awards should be considered. It was also concluded that there needs to be greater awareness of security in respect of criminal activities, including drug trafficking and the possibility of piracy.

Taxes and Fees Relating to Yachting

Having addressed the third session, on the subject of taxes and fees relating to yachting activities, Monique Stewart was asked to also summarize that session. Again harmonization and simplification were highlighted. She stressed the need for there to be an "inventory" and updating of yachting-related regulations, taxes, services and fees and, in this field, particularly in relation to the public sector, benchmarking was considered critical. There was concern that there seem to be a variety of methods for measuring the size of yachts and it was felt that a uniform standard would be beneficial, as would be a definition for what comprises a yacht. Information sharing between countries by the public sector could help simplify and harmonize taxes and fees and, where marine associations do not exist, the private sector should form groups to work through the CMA and engage with organizations on other islands.

Yachting and Economic Development

Working with Douglas Rapier from Martinique, John Duffy, CMA President, presented the conclusions of Session 4 on the subject of the economic development of yachting. Top priority in encouraging more yachts to visit the Caribbean was a simplified, web-based pre-arrival notification system. Taking note of the perceived single Caribbean space, it was considered that there is a need for marine associations to communicate and interact with each other and their respective governmental bodies and tourism authorities. It was noted that each territory approaches the market slightly differently and has its own niche within the market, and therefore each territory needs to identify its segment of the market and work to develop that segment. To assist in this, the production of usable economic impact statistics was considered a matter of urgency. The summary ended with a recommendation that the seminar be held annually.

The discussions which followed each summary caused the session to overrun by almost double the allotted time. However, when it came to an end, all participants were satisfied with the conclusions and there was a fervent wish for the words to be converted into actions.

Following expressions of thanks from the Université des Antilles et de la Guyane to the participants for attending, and congratulations from the participants to both the university and French Customs for organizing and conducting the seminar, the whole party moved to Le Marin for a waterborne tour and a (late) lunch hosted by the Mayor.



What's a Berth Worth?

At the International Yachting Seminar held in Martinique from May 30th through June 1st, Bob Hathaway, CMA Vice-President and Manager of The Marina at Marigot Bay in St. Lucia, gave a presentation on "Marina Services and Fees in the Eastern Caribbean". He examined services and fees at 35 marinas comprising 2,800 berths on seven islands.

As far as possible, data regarding berth pricing was obtained directly from marinas; some was obtained from the internet. Some rates had to be calculated from data supplied. The causes of price variation were given as:

- Geographical Location – Market
- Geographical Location – Hurricane Season
- High versus Low Season
- On-Island Competition
- Inter-Island Competition

A cross-section of typical yachts was used for comparison: a 40-foot (12-metre) monohull, typical of the cruising market; a 46-foot (14-metre) catamaran, typical of the bareboat charter market; a 65-foot (20 metre) monohull, typical of the higher-end cruising market; and a 130-foot (40-metre) monohull motor yacht, typical of the mega-yacht market.

Here are some highlights of Bob's presentation:

At the extremes, the most expensive berth overall was US$5,215.20 (Euro 4,172.16) per night in high season for a 200-metre (656-foot) yacht at Yacht Haven Grande, St. Thomas. The least expensive berth was US$12 (Euro 9.60) per night in low season for a 40-foot monohull at Prickly Bay Marina, Grenada.

Similarly, Yacht Haven Grande offered the most expensive berth for the 40-footer — US$110 (Euro 88) per night in high season.

Pricing policies for multihulls varied significantly, ranging from no additional charge to double rates. Most common was a 50-percent surcharge on monohull rates. For a 46-foot catamaran, the most expensive berth was US$128.80 (Euro 103.04) at Simpson Bay Marina, St. Maarten and the least expensive was US$19.78 (Euro 15.82) at Secret Harbour, Grenada.

For a 65-foot monohull, the difference was dramatic: the most expensive berth was US$256.75 (Euro 205.40) at Yacht Club Costa Smeralda in the BVI, and the least expensive — almost a tenth of that — was US$26 (Euro 20.80) at the Catamaran Marina, Antigua.

The price extremes were even more striking for a 130-foot mega-yacht, ranging from US$52 (Euro 41.60) at the Catamaran Marina, Antigua, to nearly 20 times more — US$1,007.50 (Euro 806) — at Yacht Haven Grande, St. Thomas and at Isle de Sol, St. Maarten.

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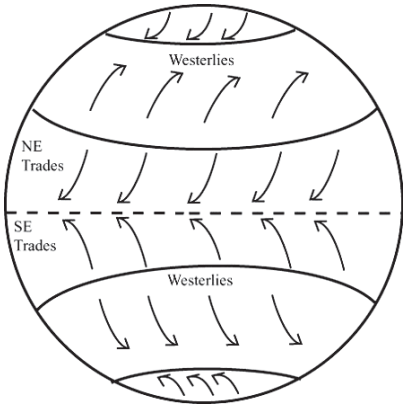
CARIBBEAN VOYAGING

CARIBBEAN SUMMER TRADES AND THE VALUE OF 12

by Frank Virgintino

Summer Tradewinds

The tradewinds are easterly surface winds that cruisers encounter in the Caribbean. They flow from east to west, within the lower portion of the Earth's atmosphere.



In the northern hemisphere the tradewinds blow predominantly from the northeast, especially during the early part of the tradewind season (late November through February). At times they can be quite boisterous and can blow for weeks on end in the 15- to 30-knot range. These winds are sometimes referred to as Christmas Winds. At other times during this period there are times of no wind at all. During this time period the direction (northeast) that the winds come from is quite predictable, but the winds are not reliable or constant.

As the tradewind season gets older the winds become more easterly and tend to become more constant and steadier. Their velocity normally ranges from 12 to 18 knots.

Just before the start of hurricane season, the winds move to the east-southeast. They tend to be constant but go from "dry" to "wet".

Staying Dry

The net effect of the above is that if you are cruising in the Caribbean during the late spring and summer months, the wind will tend to the east-southeast. However, as summer starts (with the summer solstice), thundershowers can occur virtually every day with accompanying squally winds. Humidity is heavy and your boat needs to be adjusted to meet the challenges of the season.

An awning to deter the full intensity of the Caribbean sun is a necessity, and in summer helps keep the rain out as well.



Ventilation and airflow are important both to the livability of the boat as well as the impact of humidity on equipment, in particular the electronics. All electrical contacts should be cleaned and sprayed with a good-quality electrical spray. You should run your electronics daily during the summer season. This allows them to "heat up" and keeps humidity out.

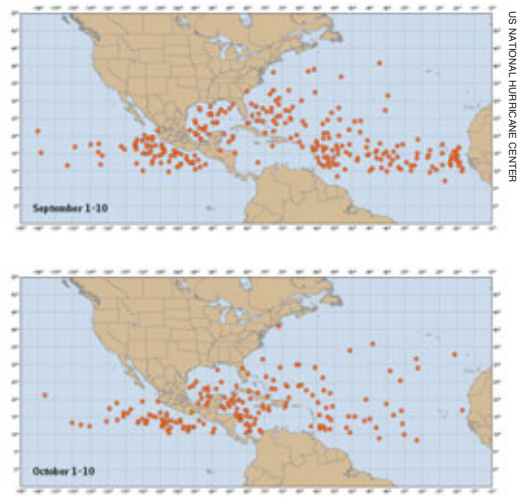
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Bunk cushions should be raised slightly, using strips of wood or plastic, to allow airflow under them. All paper and cardboard aboard should be checked and removed if possible or put into some type of waterproof wrapping. Get humidity treatments for clothes lockers, either in the form of hanging bags of calcium chloride or something that will cause the locker to remain dry, e.g., a dehumidifier. During the summer months humidity is your enemy and all ways to deter it should be employed. If you do not have an air conditioner, use fans — and not just to sleep. Use a number of them around the boat to maintain airflow.

The H Word

There is another enemy in the Caribbean during the summer months. It is one that is much more menacing than heat and humidity. Hurricanes are very strong, low-pressure tropical disturbances that can cause property damage as well as loss of life. They should not be underestimated, nor should you believe that they can be predicted with any certainty. The best way to handle a hurricane is to not be in the area where hurricanes pass close by or over. While hurricanes can form at any time of the year, July through October is the period of highest risk. The NOAA chart below clearly shows that September is the month of greatest risk of hurricane and tropical storms.

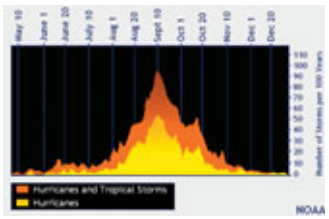


These charts show that the formation points of named storms tend to move from the Atlantic to the Western Caribbean as the season progresses

The best way to manage that risk is, if you plan to remain in the Caribbean, to move south of latitude 12 degrees north.

The illustration on the previous page showing Caribbean hurricane tracks since 1960 shows that since 1960 only two hurricanes have passed over or close to Grenada (Grenada is about 12 degrees north latitude) and none have touched Trinidad. The further south you are in the Caribbean the safer it is as to the probability of hurricanes.

Probability of a hurricane strike is not the same as the predictability of their movement. Hurricane Lenny in October of 1999 moved from west to east, which is contrary to typical hurricane behavior. While cruising, never believe you can count on a hurricane moving in a predictable way.



As the hurricane season gets older, the origin point of hurricanes moves further to the north and west.

Some people believe that if a hurricane comes they can just take shelter in a hurricane hole. The concept of a "hurricane hole" is largely exaggerated. There aren't really that many, and they are usually so crowded with local boats that you most likely will not find space. Get south of 12 degrees and stay there for hurricane season; that is your best bet to avoid one.

The question "Where in the southeastern Caribbean, south of 12 degrees, do I stay during hurricane season?" can be answered as follows:

• GRENADA. If you plan to stay aboard during hurricane season, Grenada is a really nice place and you will have plenty of company in the form of other cruisers. There are facilities where your boat can be hauled and you can get work done. However, you must keep your eye on the weather as Hurricane Ivan went right over Grenada in 2004 and caused tremendous damage.

• TRINIDAD. Trinidad & Tobago can be said to be "out of the hurricane zone". It has been over 100 years since a hurricane touched down in Trinidad. If you want to cruise and gunk-hole during hurricane season, the island of Trinidad is not a good cruising destination, as it does not have the type of anchorages found in Grenada. Inland exploration, however, is excellent and there is much to see. It excels in facilities and nowhere will you find more boat-work talent in a given area than Chaguaramas, Trinidad. The range of work and the competitiveness of the service environment is unmatched elsewhere.

• ABC ISLANDS. They are beautiful and they have facilities to haul and have work done, particularly Curaçao. Prices tend to be higher than in either Grenada or Trinidad. Although the "left elbow" of hurricanes passing "up the alley" (between the Greater Antilles and the ABC islands) can sometimes be felt, the ABC islands have no history of direct hits.

• VENEZUELA. This country is out of the hurricane zone and the price is right. There are facilities, haulage and talent. However, Venezuela suffers from being not safe for cruisers. Some say there are safe "zones", but to me it is more like playing roulette with your boat and personal safety. It is best avoided, at least for the immediate future.

In Summary

The late spring and summer tradewinds are more constant than tradewinds during the early part of the high tradewind season. However, they also carry more humidity and tend towards the southeast. Hurricanes can form, in particular from July through October. The probability of a hurricane south of 12 degrees north latitude is small and that is where you and your boat should plan to be during the months of highest hurricane probability. Don't forget your hat and plenty of sunscreen; you will need them. And an umbrella!

Frank Virgintino is the author of Free Cruising Guides (www.freecruisingguide.com).





TIME CAPSULE

Weather Window, What's That?

by Don Street

Since marking the milestone of the 200th edition of Caribbean Compass *in May, we take the opportunity to share with our current readers some articles from the past. This article by* Don Street *was published in September of 2003. It is interesting to reflect on what has changed — and what hasn't — since then.*



LUKA RONE

In the Eastern Caribbean, I feel that waiting for weather windows is literally a waste of time. One of the problems, as far as I can figure out, is that the meteorologists/weather routers seem to think that any time it is blowing much over 20 knots, yachts should stay in port.

All winter long the weather report runs like a broken record: "Winds east-northeast (or east-southeast) 15 to 18 knots, higher in gusts." They don't say how much higher the gusts will be, but it very seldom blows over 25 knots here, except in squalls. A properly prepared boat, even during the windy winter months, should not have to wait for weather windows. If you can't take 25 knots on the nose, you should not be sailing in the Caribbean. Waiting for weather windows means you spend a tremendous amount of time sitting in port instead of sailing.

This is not to say that I've never waited for weather in the region. A few years ago, in January, we did have an extended period when it was blowing 25 to 30 knots day after day. Jol Byerley in Antigua said on his 0900 broadcast that he could not remember when it had blown that hard for that long. Jol convinced my wife, Trich, that *Li'l Iolaire,* at 28 feet, was too small for the conditions and we should stay in port. We waited for four or five days. It did finally ease off to 20 knots, and we took off.

The only other time I can remember an extended period of heavy wind was back in the early 1980s when we had to wait for a weather window to get across Anegada Passage. We were in Tortola for the BVI Regatta and heading down island for the Guadeloupe-to-Antigua race that preceded Antigua Sailing Week. However, it really piped up. We were beating eastwards through Sir Francis Drake Channel, under staysail, storm trisail (*Iolaire*'s storm trisail is so big that it has a reef in it, full size is slightly smaller than a double-reefed main) and mizzen, with the lee rail down. I decided that sailing like this all the way to Guadeloupe was a good way to convince my two sons, then aged 12 and ten, that sailing was no damn fun. So we turned around and went into Marina Cay. We sat there for three days, with it blowing a solid 30 knots day after day.

As far as I can remember, in the 48 years I have been in the Caribbean those were the only two times I have waited for a weather window.

Let's look back at this past season: In early April I was in Grenada. Everyone was telling me to wait for a weather window as it was blowing hard, but I wanted to get to Antigua for the Classic Yacht Regatta and the arrival of my son Donald Street the Third, and I had numerous stops I needed to make en route. So I said to heck with the weather window.

Normally I would leave the south coast of Grenada very early in the morning heading east, stopping halfway up the coast at Lascar Cove, Le Petit Trou or Requin Bay well before noon. We would have a relaxing afternoon in a quiet uncrowded harbour, then depart early the next morning before it starts blowing and arrive at Grenada's Sandy Island, again before noon. We would enjoy the solitude of Sandy Island, then continue on the third day to Carriacou, leaving Sandy Island at the appropriate time to pick up the weather-going tide between there and Carriacou. This multi-stage approach makes a nice easy trip, rather than one long day of beating your brains out from the south coast of Grenada to Carriacou. (For a more detailed description of how to reach Carriacou via the east coast of Grenada, see the sailing directions on the back of the Imray-Iolaire chart B32.)

However, in this case we decided to head up the west coast as it was the first sail of the season and I had a new crew on board who had never sailed with me, or on *Li'l Iolaire*.

We discovered that our two stern anchors were badly fouled on mooring chains. Since I have blown my ears out and cannot dive more than seven or eight feet, we had a job clearing the anchors and did not depart until 0930. We headed up the west coast of Grenada under blade jib, reefed main and mizzen. We made very good progress until we ran into light airs between Gouyave and Victoria. The wind filled in and off we went. The ride was a bit bouncy to say the least, but *Li'l Iolaire* made short work of it.

We passed Miss Irene Point on Union Island at 1900 and took another half an hour to coax *Li'l Iolaire* along in the light airs to the northeast corner of Chatham Bay, reaching the anchorage at 1930. We then sat down to a very nice dinner.

The next morning we left at 0800. It was blowing "right pert" as they would say in Maine, so we had up blade jib, double-reefed main and mizzen. As we were passing between Union and Mayreau, we could see a squall coming and with an air of over-confidence I said, "Don't worry Al, she'll take a hell of a lot of wind with this sail combination."

However the squall hit us butt-end first and I had to quickly douse the main. We still had more than enough sail up with blade jib and mizzen. We flew along for about half an hour under this rig, then the wind eased and back up went the double-reefed main. Then, after another half an hour, we shook out the second reef. An hour later we had the full main up and had a glorious sail to Bequia, arriving at 1200. If we had listened to our friends' advice in Grenada we would never have gone sailing!

On the Bequia to St. Lucia run we missed the tide in the Bequia Channel. (You can't hit them right all the time.) It was a real fight to get around the corner, but once we did we had an excellent sail.

In St. Lucia, again, everyone was waiting for a weather window, but again, I was in a hurry to get up to Antigua. So, to hell with weather windows: we departed Rodney Bay under blade jib and mizzen. We decided to take a good look at the wind and sea conditions once clear of Pigeon Island before I made my decision as to setting the main and how many reefs to put in it. As we rounded Pigeon Island I tied a single reef and then a double reef in the main, but did not bother hoisting it as we took off like a scalded cat.

This time we had judged the tide correctly and it was lifting us beautifully to windward, plenty to pass to windward of Martinique, but the ride was a little bouncy with the wind against the tide. With only slightly cracked sheets we were able to sail well clear of the east coast of Martinique and pleasantly discovered when we reached the latitude of the southern end of the island that the tide was still under us. We sailed at a full seven knots over the bottom all the way up to Presque Isle.

After 18 hours I finally hoisted the double-reefed main and we continued at hull speed. Eight hours later, as we passed between Guadeloupe and Desirade, we shook one reef out of the main and doused the mizzen so we were sailing with blade jib and reefed main. It was a glorious broad reach to Falmouth Harbour, Antigua, where we arrived at 0130 to pleasantly discover that — wonder of wonders — they had not only installed buoys, but had a buoy lit on Bishop's Shoal. Thus, the nighttime entrance into Falmouth Harbour was easy, except that it was impossible to pick up the range lights. However, we did not need them as we passed Bishop's Shoal close aboard to starboard. Once we got into calm water, we rounded up, dropped the anchor, set the mizzen, set the anchor and poured a good stiff drink to celebrate sailing 210 miles in 34 hours in a 28-foot engineless yawl. Why wait for weather windows?

If you can't take 25 knots on the nose, you should not be sailing in the Caribbean. Waiting for weather windows means you spend a tremendous amount of time sitting in port instead of sailing

There are, of course, a few things to remember about heavy weather in the Eastern Caribbean. Boats with a single-headsail rig should add a removable staysail stay, so that they can set up a staysail when expecting heavy weather. This way you can set up a staysail and roll up or take down the sail on the headstay.

Further, ketches and yawls should not try to beat dead to windward under headsails and mizzen alone. All too often you see boats doing this, and the skippers will say they are just as fast under headsails and mizzen as they are with headsails and reefed main. But what they apparently don't realize is that as soon as they douse the mainsail they lose the slot effect between the headsails and the main, thus increasing the tacking angle. This means your speed made good to windward drops off drastically. If you are beating to windward and are tacking at 90 degrees, you sail 1.4 miles for every mile you make to windward. If you are tacking at 120 degrees you have to sail two miles to make one to windward.

For that reason if a ketch or a yawl has to shorten sail to beat dead to windward, they should shorten down to staysail and reefed (or deep-reefed) main and get rid of the mizzen and whatever sail sets on the headstay. This way, everything is centered in the boat, the slot effect between the headsail and the main is preserved, and progress to windward will be much faster.

Important Note

Of course, in the Hurricane Season, weather windows are a serious consideration. During the Hurricane Season you should listen to the radio every morning for hurricane warnings.

If a storm is predicted, get yourself south, below the hurricane belt. In my opinion there is no longer any such thing as a safe hurricane hole anywhere in the Eastern Caribbean. Even if you are perfectly moored in the perfect anchorage, the "hurricane holes" are now so overcrowded that an improperly moored boat will inevitably drag down on top of your boat, most likely causing massive damage or total loss.

Also, the subject of weather windows is very important when you are trying to head to the Caribbean from the East Coast of the States, or from England or Ireland through the Bay of Biscay. In those cases there are very definite reasons to wait for weather windows.

TERRA FIRMA TIME IN WESTERN PUERTO RICO



ELLEN BIRRELL

by Ellen Birrell

Haven't had time off the boat lately? Whether taking the Thorny Path from North America into the Eastern Caribbean or sailing north to your Canadian or US roost, or if, as is the case for my partner, Jim, and me, your boat in the Caribbean is home 24/7/365, Puerto Rico's western region, known as Porta del Sol, may be just the right place for some rest and relaxation ashore.

Are limitless plush, urban, trendy new restaurants and bars your passion? Oh. Then don't bother reading further. Though first-rate restaurants and resorts dot the northwest, Porta del Sol is largely laid back, modest, clean and comfortable with mountains, wavy beaches, estuaries and bluffs. Do you like to board-, body-, or SUP-surf, or would like to learn how? Do you even know what SUP stands for? Don't feel bad. When José Rafols, owner of Aquatica Dive & Surf, mentioned it during his *muy rapido* ramble through the offerings of Aquatica, I had to interrupt him: "SUV? You rent SUVs?"

"No," he responded politely. "SUPs. It stands for Stand Up Paddleboards."

Location and Access

For decades Puerto Rico's "west coast", shall we just say, has catered to local power yachts and commercial vessels. Aguadilla, a town bordering vast Mayaguez Bay, tried in earnest to attract private yachts. They built a jettied marina that met its demise in the winter swell decades ago.

New developments just north of Boquerón and south of Mayaguez in Porta Real now make arrival and roosting attractive. New in 2011, Marina Pescaderia located in Porta Real contains 97 slips. Frank Virgintino describes this well in his newly published www.freecruisingguides.com/puertorico. Old guidebooks and current legal documents state that you must initially bring your vessel into a port of entry. For Puerto Rico's west coast, that would be Mayaguez. According to marina owner José Méndez, upon request the US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) is normally willing to drive down from Mayaguez to clear in yachts arriving in Porta Real.

North of Mayaguez is Aguadilla Airport. News flash: JetBlue is opening up additional service to Aguadilla in 2012. The airport is also served by American Airlines and Spirit. Ten years ago, when considering flying family or friends in from the States inexpensively and conveniently to the north edge of the Eastern Caribbean, one would think of San Juan. Now, Aguadilla has come into its own. Airfares rival mighty SJU and convenience trumps it. While big airports like SJU have their place, don't you just love arriving at the small and simple Long Beach, John Wayne or San Diego airports of southern California? Likewise, Aguadilla is small, simple, uncongested. Whether you might need to get off your boat for a trip north or be welcoming crew to join you from outside the region, western Puerto Rico is a winner.

Additionally, fishing spots in southwestern Puerto Rico include El Pichincho, Isla Desecheo, and Isla de Mona. For diving, try La Parguera, Isla Desecheo, Punta Graniquilla. Some of the best beaches include Bahía Sucia, Combate, La Parguera, Boquerón, and Los Pozos.

Let Terra Firma Time Begin

You can confidently leave your vessel at the excellent new Marina Pescaderia in Porta Real (see item in Business Briefs, page 8) for terra firma time.

The towns of Isabela and Rincón straddle Aguadilla in the northwest. In 1968, Rincón made a splash on the international scene when it hosted the World



Above: What's 'cowabunga' in Spanish? A paddleboarder rides the surf

Left: Aguadilla not only provides sweet beachfront accommodation, but crew coming from North America can arrive right at Aguadilla Airport

Surfing Championship. Today, the area is reminiscent of southern California beach towns in a time before Orange County was called "OC".

In April, 2012, Jim and I checked into a *parador* in Isabela. It was clean-cut fun — bicycling, beachcombing, people watching and exploring. A large coastal reef creates interesting tide pools and attracts seabirds.

The parador system was the brainchild of the Puerto Rico Tourism Company. Two decades ago, to boost awareness for small and mid-sized family-owned lodging properties around Puerto Rico, special promotional considerations were given to a select group of 19 properties of between 15 and 75 units each. More modest than a full-service hotel, the paradors must meet certain standards and the owner must live on the property.

For me, having spent the '60s and '70s on the beaches and sailing in the harbors from San Diego to LA, driving coastal roads with surfers unstrapping their boards from their cars, seeing surf shops in every town, I felt at home in Rincón. Passing a young man dismounting his moped and unleashing his surfboard, I thought of my kid brother skateboarding down Harbor View Hills to Big Corona State Beach, surfboard under armpit.

"Yes, officer. Did I do something wrong?" another flashback. At 18, on Pacific Coast Highway, CHP pulled me over while I was riding my friend's moped. "Young lady, don't you think riding that moped in a sun dress is inappropriate?"

We were lucky enough to stay at Parador Villas del Mar Hau; 39 acres of well-maintained facilities, lovely landscaping and open spaces. Located on the stretch of beach just east of Isabela's exciting blowhole, the parador summons your best remembrances of family holidays. Boardwalks connect one-story cabins. There are swings, shuffleboard, basketball and tennis courts. *Puertorequeña* matriarchs sweep villa porch after a family meal, children gleefully run on the beach or explore the tide pools.

—Continued on next page



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A man on the point off the main lodge moves between two fishing poles. Men and women snorkel tranquil waters. Surf breaks on the other side of a rocky outcropping.

It's the Plants, Pups and People

A typical day: As we await breakfast at the open air restaurant of the main lodge, a knowing pup on the wooden deck blocks our access to the dining area. He seems to be thinking, *Breakfast soon. Possible handouts.*

From our table we see a red, a pink and a blue balloon spring free of their beach tether. Like brave swimmers, they blow westward. Bobbing inside the surf break, amidst powerful swells which boom shoreward, the balloons are unfettered. They gaily float westbound for the point that separates Villas del Mar Hau's beach from Isabela's Blow Hole.

Sprinkled within the whooshing ocean cadence, seabirds squawk and songbirds tweet. Morning sunlight on wave-faces harkens me back to my California roots. Swim trunks, bikinis, surfing. Time off the boat, away from projects, gives us a chance to take a deep breath, reminisce and relax.

Australian pine and sea grapes line the property. Like a Jimi Hendrix hairdo, pruned Australian pines wear an Afro atop their stubbed trunks. Cottages on the coast equal *tranquilidad* and rejuvenation. The same rough-hewn pine used for fencing has been cut and shellacked to make deck tables. There is an understated grandeur here. It's a nature lover's lucky day.

Walking back to our villa we meet two 80ish-year-young women. "Elena," I respond when asked *mi nombre.*

"I love Elena," Austria says. "I had a friend, Elena. She had one hundred years." We were brave women communicating in languages foreign. Uninhibited, we trip over verb conjunction and sentence structure. They embolden me to use my limited Spanish. I learn their names are Juanita and Austria. "Like the country," she instructs me.

"*¿Y tu?* Where you come from?" Austria asks.

"*Si,*" I say nervously, "*Ur... Yo soy...*" (then I take a deep breath because I always botch the pronunciation of the too-many-syllabled word) "*Californiana. Mi esposo es...*" (then I couldn't figure out how to turn "Utahn" into Spanish) "*oo-tah.*"


ELLEN BIRRELL

Above: Examining the blowhole at Isabela. 'Time off the boat gives us a chance to take a deep breath'

Below: Diving in the Aguadilla area


JOSE RAFOLS

"Ah," Austria and Juanita smile and nod.

"*Conoce montañas de Utah?*"

"*Si.* We live near San Juan."

"*Condado o Isla Verde?*" I offer up familiar coastal towns.

"Near Plaza Las Americas," Austria says.

"*Ah, Rio Piedras.*"

"*¡Si! ¡Si!*"

We are all enthused that I know of their city.

When I compliment Austria on her red pedicured toenails inside her metallic flip-flops, she says, "What size are you?"

"Ur. Uh," *Yikes, she thinks I like her shoes.* I want to say "*no, no quiero su zapatos,*" but think that might be rude.

"Here, here," she's taking off her metallic flip-flops. "I want you to have them."

Distracting her with an embrace and, "*Mucho gusto. Adios. Hasta luego,*" the lovely exchange ended.

Walking west out the gated entry, "Bicycle Path" with an arrow catches our eye. "Let's go!" We find the boardwalk ends abruptly with a 30-meter drop down a steep path. Below, like an Emerald City, luxurious groundcover creeps up to embrace surrounding bushes and trees. I expect to see a Leprechaun dancing a jig on the lightly traveled path. "I guess someone could forge their bike down this," I stand contemplating. Without hesitation, Jim bounds down the loose dirt and rocks to the green wonderland below.

—*Continued on next page*

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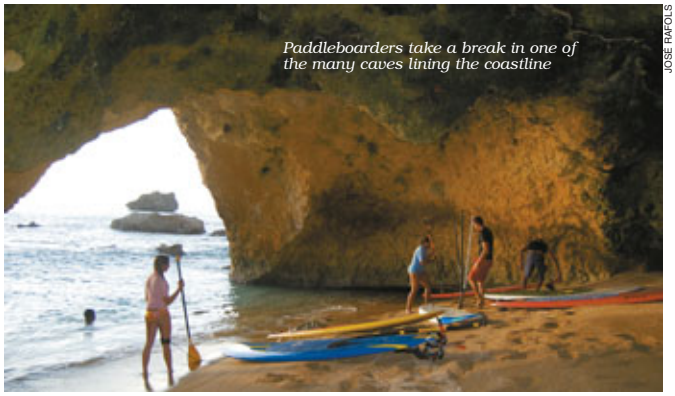


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Paddleboarders take a break in one of the many caves lining the coastline

JOSE RAFOLS

—Continued from previous page

It's the Recreation

Like José had told us, stand up paddleboarding is king here. Easily available, one can paddleboard on tranquil waters or graduate to exciting paddleboard surfing. Aquatica Dive & Surf in nearby Aguadilla offered dive, surf, stand up paddleboarding and bicycle rentals; individual and group lessons available.

"If it was all about bicycling when Lance Armstrong was winning the Tour de France every year, now the interest has shifted to Stand Up Paddleboarding. It is really hot right now. People love it!" according to José Rafols, owner.

The bicycle paths of the area seem endless. They follow the coastal highway and roam sand dunes.

Located in Rincón, we took Tropical Trailrides' sunset coastal horseback ride. From the well-kept and extensive stables, we passed exquisite Villas Montañas Resort before dropping onto the beach. Reining our horses inland, we rode through a gigantic swale separating homes on a high bluff from the beach below. Then we became engulfed in the shadowy bliss of an enormous almond grove. Poking back onto a remote beach, we eventually reached a rocky point. Dismounting, we had the choice to climb to the top of a bluff for a dramatic coastal view, or a spelunking teaser at a nearby cave.

It's the Countryside

A visit to western Puerto Rico wouldn't be complete without the *el campo* experience. The modern twist for your country experience is agritourism. Defined in Wikipedia, "agritourism involves any agriculturally based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch."

Off PR 2, Highway 112 winds through emerald vistas surrounded by valleys, cliffs and canyons. After 30 minutes, we took a quarter-mile jog onto Highway 445 and arrived at El Jibarito, a dude ranch of sorts. The staff was friendly and the heavy wooden lodge decorated with paraphernalia of yesteryear was a treat. If you love coffee, *jugo fresca* and wholesome bakery and homemade meal selections, you're in. Juanita demonstrated how they roast and grind local coffee beans.

Dumbo the Elephant. Ha — the elephant-eared cow. We stared down the amazing beast from his pasture's edge. Imported from India to work Puerto Rican fields in the 19th century, these beasts of labor graze lazily in El Jibarito's verdant setting. We explored the pastures and stables, and hiked to three waterfalls.

What were sugar and lime plantations of centuries past are now homes, fields, and, in the case of El Jibarito, sustainable farming and eco-lodges.

As we left, dropping down out of the mountains our spirits were high, our breathing slow, and our mood *muy contento*.

Within an hour's drive south, we took in picturesque San Germán and Cabo Rojos. Highway 301 took us out to Cabo Rojo lighthouse and adjacent Playa Sucia area. We enjoyed the walking, biking, and photography of the unique estuaries, sand dunes and bluffs, gold cliffs and dramatic vistas in every direction.

Hasta Luego

Staying at the parador in Isabela created that best mix of opportunities for R&R. Nearby, vibrant nightlife at the restaurants, cafés and bars featuring live music and the surf and kiteboarding scene infused plenty of action. We'll remember stumbling onto Crash Boat Beach on a Sunday seeing puertorequeños living it up in their own playful style, and meeting the mayor of Aguadilla.

For a week, Jim and I liberated ourselves from the day-to-day of our floating home.

Back at Marina Pescaderia, the owner smiles brightly from his office. José is enthused about the future of his marina and the region. "We are already a popular destination for sport fishing. Cruisers appreciate coming into our bay after crossing the Mona Passage. It is quiet here, welcoming. We're enthused about sailing here, too. We play host to the annual Boquerón to Porta Real Race. It also includes *chalanas*." Chalanas are traditional sailboats that originate from Salinas on the south coast. José was excited to talk about the future. We're excited about returning.

Ellen Birrell enjoys cruising, freelance writing and photography within the Eastern Caribbean. For more, visit www.boldlygo.us. The account of Boldly Go's *2010 attack by pirates in Venezuela will be aired on The Biography Channel's 'I Survived' July 15th.*





ELLEN BIRRELL (2)

Jim enjoys fresh orange juice and locally grown coffee at El Jibarito



JOSE RAFOLS

Above: Bicycling is an effective way to see a lot of western Puerto Rico

Left: *Riding horseback on the trail to the sea*

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OLD HAVANA FOR CRUISERS



by Sally Erdle

One of the most popular Cuban ports of entry for boats arriving from the north is Marina Hemingway. The harbor for the Marina is at Santa Fé, about nine miles westward along the coast from Havana. Although the marina is a bit run down, the presence of helpful staff and the friendly Hemingway International Yacht Club goes a long way toward making up for any shortcomings in facilities or services. And most notably, if you clear in at Marina Hemingway, or visit there during your Cuban cruise, you're at an excellent base for exploring one of the most enchanting cities in the Caribbean: Old Havana.

Established in 1519, Old Havana occupies the western side of the long, narrow entrance to Havana Harbor. For any seaman, the first sight of such a vast, well-protected bay proclaims "haven". The Spanish, recognizing the harbor's importance, began fortifying it in the 16th century. The fort of San Carlos de la Cabaña, built in the 18th century on the eastern shore of the harbor entrance, is the largest fortress complex in the Americas.



ALL PHOTOS: ANN WESTERGARD

Above: Calle San Ignacio, looking toward Plaza de la Catedral. Find unique artwork at the experimental printmaking studio just before the arcade

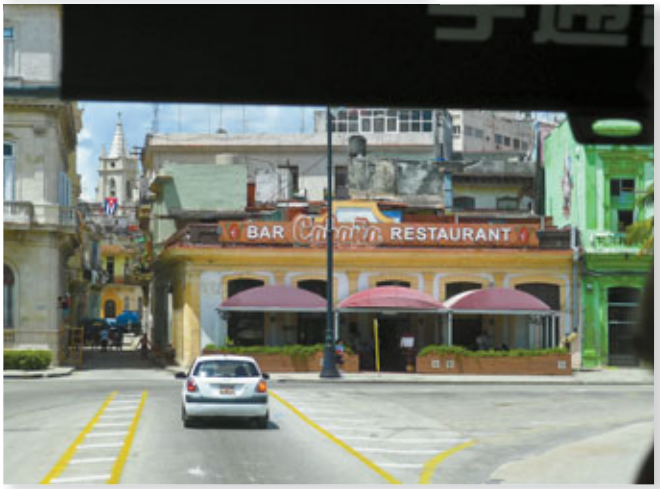
Below: The ferry terminal where you embark for Regla or Casablanca. Expect a security check; in 2003 a harbor ferry was hijacked and ordered (unsuccessfully) to Florida





Left: Old Havana is full of surprising bursts of color and creative expression

Below: The Cabaña on Calle Tacón is the perfect perch to wait for the shuttle bus back to Marina Hemingway



The old city's architecture reflects three principal periods in Cuba's history — Spanish colonial, American neo-colonial and revolutionary. The core of Old Havana, with its Spanish colonial government buildings, cathedrals, mansions, narrow streets and spacious plazas, was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1982.

From Marina Hemingway, you can take the free shuttle bus to Old Havana. It leaves at 10:00AM and 11:30AM departing from in front of the disco at Hotel Acuario in the marina complex. It returns to the hotel promptly at 5:30PM. (You can also catch a local bus to Havana from the stop on the main road just east of the marina, but these are apt to be overcrowded to a level unimagined even on the "dollar vans" of the Eastern Caribbean.)

You'll be dropped off on Calle Tacón near the corner of Calle Cuba, a perfect place to start exploring. As you step off the bus, you might be greeted by a few guys offering to show you around. We said we preferred to do our own thing, which was graciously accepted. This was the case with virtually all such potential entrepreneurs even the (very few) outright beggars.

A couple of good self-guided walking tours are outlined in the *AA Explorer Guide to Cuba* by Fred Mawer (available at amazon.com), but just about any random wander will be rewarded.

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When feet fail, take a taxi (many are vintage American cars), a horse-drawn carriage, a bicycle-powered bicitaxi, or one of the egg-like, three-wheeled-motorcycle "coco-taxis".

Souvenirs abound, ranging from vintage books and magazines at the stalls on the Plaza de Armas to the ubiquitous cigars, Che T-shirts and rum. The Taller Experimental de Gráfica just off the west side of the Plaza de la Catedral is a working printmaking studio where the tiny gallery upstairs sells the work of upcoming new Cuban printmakers (many in boat-friendly sizes) at affordable prices.



Souvenir shops abound — and rooftop bars and restaurants provide great vantage points for people watching

If visiting the Museum of the Revolution in the former presidential palace, don't forget to go out back and see the 1943-built, 60-foot cabin cruiser *Granma*, which carried Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and their group from Mexico to Cuba in 1956 to begin the revolution.

At the corner of Calle Oficios and Churrusca, take a tour through the vintage presidential train car, fitted out like a Belle Époque gentleman's yacht. As at many attractions here with no entrance fee, you are expected to tip the guide.

Just east of the Plaza de Armas, stop for a cold drink on the "upper deck" of the boat-like building that was once Club Náutico Internacional back in the day (See photo on page 16). It's a relaxing spot for viewing comings and goings of tugs, pilot boats, and if you're lucky, a large ship squeezing through the harbor entrance with the backdrop of the fort of San Carlos de la Cabaña gracing the far shore.

For an even closer waterborne look at the harbor, take one of the funky little ferries that leave frequently from Mulle Luz (just south of the three big Customs piers) across to Casablanca or Regla. Be prepared for a security check and standing room only. In Regla you can visit the chapel of a deity personified by both the Catholic black Madonna la Virgen de Regla, patron saint of the port of Havana, and the Santería goddess of the sea, Yemayá.



Trippy and zippy: You can choose between a ride in Omero's 1948 Dodge or (inset) an egg-like coco-taxi

On the way back to the bus, be sure to make time for a stop at El Navio bookstore, at 119 Calle Obispo near the Plaza de Armas, to pick up the excellent Cuban yachting chart kits. If you can read Spanish, the series of cruising guides to the various parts of the Cuban coast will also be worthy purchases.

A good way to end a day in Habana Vieja is to wait for the return bus at La Cabaña Bar and Restaurant, kitty-corner across the street from the bus stop. Have a beer or a coffee in either the air-conditioned restaurant or outside under the awning. Here you can watch the world go by — and keep an eye on the hotel bus to make sure you don't miss it!

Up-to-date information about clearing in to Cuba and more can be found at http://cruisingincuba.com/cruising_notes.htm.



Bici-taxis are a fun and green way to get around town



Havana was established in 1519 and 'Romeo and Juliet' was written later that century. They might not feel out of place



The 1900-vintage presidential train car, once used by Batista and later by Castro, echoes classic yacht interior design



Now I Really Know What This Yachting Thing Is All About

by Danny Donelan



Now back in the office after a month of being out on the ocean, sailing and living life to the fullest, I think I finally realize what this yachting thing is all about.

At the end of March I was hurrying like crazy to put the finishing touches on my Petite Martinique sloop, *Savvy*, at Grenada Marine where I had the boat lifted and put on the hard for some much-needed work. The workmanship up there is top class, with Turbulence Sails organizing my sails and rigging while GM's mechanic, Stefan Fletcher, and his team sorted out *Savvy*'s engine. Having Island Water World right there on site where I could buy paints, sandpaper, West System, etcetera was very convenient. Added to this, the ladies at the restaurant cooked some amazing local food every day and enjoying the live band Barracuda on Saturday night was a great way to end work for the week and just chill at the bar with friends, cold beer and some of the best music around.

The cast of characters for the subsequent trip to the Antigua Classic Regatta and to the West Indies Regatta in St. Barths included me, Walter Ollivierre, Stefan Charles and Tom Fryer. A little bit about everyone: I'm the Assistant Manager at Port Louis Marina in Grenada, Walter is a boatbuilder from Carriacou and the captain, Stefan, is a local fisherman. Tom is just some wayward yachter who was looking for a ride to Antigua and who let us know at the end of the trip that he is a musician (some good that did us; he couldn't cook to save his life so a little music could have gone a long way).



Now we're cruising! Danny and his crew head for adventure

Mission Creep

I had done this trip a few years prior (when I worked for Peter de Savary) to race and promote Grenada and Port Louis at the Antigua Classic and had always wanted to repeat it. Once Alexis Andrews, organizer of the West Indies Regatta, found out I was coming to Antigua again, he immediately started convincing me to take more time off to do the St. Barths race as well. The clincher was his new film *Vanishing Sails* (http://vimeo.com/32574938), which quite frankly just made me proud to be a Grenadian and also the owner of one of these amazing and unique vessels.

—Continued on next page

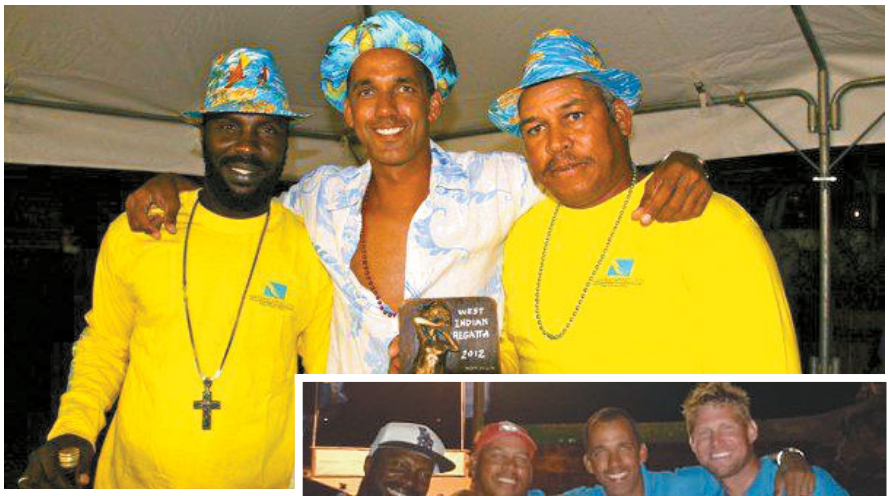
—*Continued from previous page*

Alexis also chipped in that UNESCO would be sponsoring a "market day" in Gustavia to help promote inter-island trade like these very vessels did it in the old days. So, not being the sort of tourist who can sit on a beach and read a book, I decided that this was going to be a working holiday. Off to De la Grenade, which makes some of the most wonderful liqueurs, jams, jellies, etcetera, all with Grenadian fruit; then to Art Fabrik for their unique batik creations, Fidel Productions for their very creative craft, and finally Westerhall Rum so we could give the Northern Caribbean a taste of Grenada. Added to these sponsors were Peter de Savary, Camper & Nicholsons Marinas, Insurance Consultants of Grenada, the Grenada Board of Tourism and the Marine and Yachting Association of Grenada, who all helped make our trip possible.

Two Hops to Antigua

We set sail for our first stop, Windward, Carriacou, so Walter could say hi to his kids who live over there. A bit of last-minute provisioning, a look at the new sloops being built on the beach, and a chat with the old men who sat talking about the good ol' days of boatbuilding and we were off again to Dominica. After the 30-hour sail to Portsmouth we were all in desperate need of some land and a bar of soap, so we decided to stick around for two nights.

Mo Fire water taxi was not only the first of many to stop by us that day, but his personality got to us and we just decided that he was our guy. So up Indian River we went with *Mo Fire* and the stories just kept coming. He spoke of the German couple who went upstream to Cobra's River Bar and had so much to drink that they forgot they'd arrived by boat and swam the whole way back down; he spoke of Johnny Depp and the filming of *Pirates of the Caribbean* on this river. We got to our destination after seeing a variety of birds and I could see straightaway why people love Dominica, as this place is one chilled-out, laid-back location. Two other standout points about Dominica are its Saturday market day, where all variety of fresh fruit are sold, and one of the most efficient Customs offices anywhere in the Caribbean has also to be complimented.





Above: Left to right, Stefan Charles, the author and Captain Walter Ollivierre accept Savvy's *trophy at the West Indies Regatta*

Right: Stefan, Walter, the author and long-time Savvy *crewmember Marc DeCaul with their Antigua Classic beer mug*

Racing Hard and Partying Harder

Next destination Antigua, and heading into Falmouth Harbour with all of those beautiful classic yachts has to be one of *the* sights to see in the Caribbean. We parked up right next to the other ten or so Carriacou sloops taking part in the race and right away we felt the camaraderie that exists among all the captains and crews who sail these extraordinary boats.

Within a few hours, friends who had traveled from all over to race with us started arriving and we prepared for the celebrations and hard work that was ahead. We spent the next five days racing hard and partying harder.

One of the highlights of the event was during the Parade of the Classics where we all dressed like pirates and threw out Port Louis T-shirts to all of the people watching the festivities. We then spent the rest of the night partying in costume, which had to be one of the funniest nights I have had in a long time. That night there was a talent show for any crewmember brave enough to come up on stage and do their thing. Tom got up there and owned the night. The other highlight was receiving our third-place trophy — only a beer mug, but after traveling all that way it's always nice to receive a prize.

St. Barths: Fish Broth and Family Style

We stuck around and did a few more days of partying during Antigua Race Week then it was off to St. Barths. The winds were really light this year but the organizers were pretty smart and just shortened the racecourse every day, then rafted the boats up off of the beach and started the party. This regatta had to be the most family-friendly regatta I had ever been to; kids were running all over the place. If you are a bachelor, like me, after this regatta you better believe that the urge to have kids is going to kick in.

At night there was always someone playing a guitar and singing away or we were playing dominoes and cooking fish broth on *Savvy* until the early hours. Our boat ended up being quite popular as we were the only island sloop with a stove onboard!

The highlight of this trip was just hanging out with friends, receiving a prize for the boat that traveled the farthest to be there at the race, and experiencing the immense pride all of the captains and crews take in making their boat go faster than the other.

No Better Way...

So after three weeks of living on the ocean, eating very healthily (which normally consisted of fish we caught), waking up whenever I wanted to, exploring new islands, racing, partying and meeting new friends, it was time to go back home to real life and work.

Having had a lot of time to ponder and think about life, I have come to the conclusion that there is no better way to spend your free time than on a boat traveling the Caribbean. What you really need to have along are great cooking skills (or someone onboard who has the culinary ability of Gordon Ramsey and is willing to cook all the time), some good friends who are as adventurous as you are, good ancillary services when you need work done on the boat or provisioning, good bathroom facilities when you head into shore (because you are always going to want a little more privacy than a small boat can afford), and an island full of friendly people. For me, because I like to get out on the dance floor, it also helps to have a festival going on when you get to a new port!

So now that I know what this yachting thing is really about, I have to admit I have a newfound respect and envy for you sailors that get to do this full time. It can be very hard at times with howling winds and things breaking, but it's also a time when you feel free and meet so many interesting people and see beautiful places.

I can't wait to do it all again next year.

Anyone wanting any information about Grenada or Port Louis Marina please contact Danny on the "Port Louis Marina" Facebook page. He lists numerous happenings in Grenada and has posted some great pics of the marina and Grenada.

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JULY 2012

♈ **ARIES (21 Mar - 20 Apr)**
Any headway you are making in creative projects will be rough going. Steer a course through it all with your verbal skills before the 15th and then you can just sit on the hook and take a break until the wind returns to your sails on the 22nd.

♉ **TAURUS (21 Apr - 21 May)**
This month will be a slog to windward for anything requiring ingenuity but smooth sailing in other aspects of your life. Use this time to catch up on mundane boat projects or that book you set aside.

♊ **GEMINI (22 May - 21 Jun)**
All systems are "go" for romance, so set your course, engage the autopilot and have some fun below decks!

CANCER ♋ (22 Jun - 23 Jul)
Continue your VMG in projects on board and don't let bumpy seas in business or finance slow you down. Next month will be a good one for your love life, so keep your eyes on that prize.

♌ **LEO (24 Jul - 23 Aug)**
Do all chores that require communications before the 15th — all will become garbled after that. Distract yourself from frustration by taking on imaginative new projects.

♍ **VIRGO (24 Aug - 23 Sep)**
There will be minor disagreements and misunderstandings romantically, so ease your mainsheet and you will sail through to clearer weather and calmer seas.

♎ **LIBRA (24 Sep - 23 Oct)**
After the 4th, you'll be feeling full of swashbuckling energy as Mars enters your sign. Aspects look good for romantic possibilities and there may be several — when it rains, it pours — so deciding which attraction is worth your time may be time consuming.

♏ **SCORPIO (24 Oct - 22 Nov)**
You may meet with misunderstandings with crew or cruising buddies after the 15th, so try to get as much information as possible across to them before that time. Then concentrate on work that needs doing aboard.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov - 21 Dec)**
Romance will be rough sailing, especially after the 15th when a mutiny could break out. Hoist that famous sense of humor, don't give in to impatience and you'll soon sail into smooth waters.

♑ **CAPRICORN (22 Dec - 20 Jan)**
Aspects look stormy for you during the full moon on the 3rd and it looks like your best decision would be to get off the boat entirely. If you can't arrange that, just remember: "loose lips sink ships".

♒ **AQUARIUS (21 Jan - 19 Feb)**
Concentrate on spending time with your lover; aspects are good for passion up to the 14th. Don't let pesky misunderstandings throw you out of the bunk.

♓ **PISCES (20 Feb - 20 Mar)**
Your love life may seem on again, off again, wallowing in the trough of indecision. Work on developing your creative talents and this aspect will shake out well next month.

Island Poets

ODE TO BARNACLES

I hate you, barnacle
I hate you in the morning
I hate you in the evening
I hate you at suppertime

You may be one of God's little creatures
But it's hard to love any of your features
Tell me what you do that is of any good
Lurking in your sharp and spiny hood

It seems that in the cycle of life
You cause nothing but trouble and strife
How insidiously you grow
Making my boat go so slow

And when I try to chase you away
You just sit there, getting bigger every day
Trilux anti-foul at five hundred dollars a pail?
Get real, you may as well raise the sail

And head for fresh water
Where you and your family (including Daughter)
Will DIE!!!! A horrible fate
Or you can just leave quietly. But not too late.

— Peter Ward





jerry king

"After paying for the boat, its insurance, the docking and gas, I couldn't afford a trailer."

A TEEN'S-EYE VIEW OF TOBAGO

by Bethany Smith



We arrived in Tobago on March 26th, 2012 after crossing the Atlantic from Gambia, West Africa in our Gitana 43 sloop, *Cape*. With the four of us — Mum, Dad, myself (aged 14) and my brother, Bryn (aged 12) — cooped up aboard for the 26 days of the crossing, Tobago was a welcoming green landfall set in sparkling waters.

We checked in at Scarborough and spent the next couple of weeks exploring the town while waiting for delivery of a part for our engine. While Scarborough wasn't quite the Caribbean anchorage that we had in mind, we found it safe and convenient with its own vibrant and noisy charm, and everyone was really friendly. Mum was able to restock the boat stores from the produce market and a variety of small supermarkets, and we found a number of internet cafes to catch up on e-mail. We all enjoyed trying the local food — the doubles, the rotis, the crab and dumplings, and the different types of fried chicken. Mum and Dad sampled the Carib and the rum, while my brother and I liked the fruit punches and the real Italian ice cream.

Desperate to get wet in Caribbean water, we went in search of a swim and found Bacolet Bay, 20 minutes' walk from Scarborough. This small, palm-fringed beach with soft, silvery sand was like something out of a travel brochure — and it even had decent waves for belly boarding! It was here that we drank our first green coconut milk from the coconut, which I had wanted to do for ages. We checked out the batik and handicrafts at The Cotton House on the way, and Mum bought sarongs and T-shirts to send back as presents for people.

We walked up the hill to explore Fort King George and to see the dramatic view across the bay. We picked a really hot and sunny day and were hoping for a quick rainstorm to cool off, but had to make do with a Coke at a bar on the way back down to the boat!



Photos top to bottom:
The author sampling her first green coconut
Cape at anchor in Scarborough
The Buccoo Goat Races

Exploring a little farther afield, we caught a bus to Store Bay one day and to the Crab and Goat Races at Buccoo another. You have to buy your bus tickets in advance, either from the bus station or from a variety of shops. The goat racing was hilarious, and the crab racing was fun but was over very quickly — crabs can certainly move when they want to get away from photographers!

When our engine part arrived, we moved on to anchor in the turquoise waters of Store Bay. The holding here is very good, but you have to be careful not to anchor near the electric cable that comes in from Trinidad, or in a way that can damage the reef. There is a dinghy channel to the beach, but it isn't marked so we have to slalom our way around the rocks. At the end of the beach is Bago's Bar and next to it is SBMS (Store Bay Marine Services), run by John and Katy who provide engineering services, laundry, water and WiFi. It is a short walk to the main road where there are take-away food places, an ice cream parlour, clothes and gift shops, minimarkets and fruit stalls. It is a short maxi-taxi ride to Penny Savers supermarket and Stumpy's, the ironmongers, with lots of other little shops on the way.



Before we arrived we had read that the diving in Tobago is some of the best in the Caribbean, and there are a number of dive schools to choose from. My Dad, my brother and I went diving with the R & Sea Diving to see for ourselves. We've done a drift dive, a naturalist dive, a night dive and navigation dive and have qualified as Advanced Open Water Divers while we have been here. As we are full-time liveaboards and are home-schooled, this counted as boat school — cool! We haven't been disappointed with the diving and have seen loads of different fish and coral. We quite often see French angelfish, bluehead wrasse, porcupine fish and lobsters. Mum doesn't dive, but she does snorkel and we have seen some amazing fish and coral that way too. There are even a couple of turtles swimming around the anchorage.

Store Bay is a short walk from Pigeon Point Heritage Park, where you can go windsurfing, kitesurfing and swimming on Buccoo Reef, and picnic under the coconut palms. It was windy the day we went and we collected green coconuts that had blown down. I think coconuts are my favourite fruit — especially when you can pick them up yourself! We're looking forward to exploring some of the other anchorages — and dives — around Tobago.

FREE CRUISING GUIDES

Dominican Republic Cruising Guide — DOMINICAN REPUBLIC CRUISING GUIDE

Haiti Cruising Guide — HAITI CRUISING GUIDE

Jamaica Cruising Guide — JAMAICA CRUISING GUIDE

Trinidad Cruising Guide — TRINIDAD CRUISING GUIDE

Cayman Islands Cruising Guide — CAYMAN ISLANDS CRUISING GUIDE

Puerto Rico Cruising Guide — PUERTO RICO CRUISING GUIDE

www.freecruisingguide.com

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MERIDIAN PASSAGE OF THE MOON

JULY - AUGUST 2012

Crossing the channels between Caribbean islands with a favorable tide will make your passage faster and more comfortable. The table below, courtesy Don Street, author of Street's Guides and compiler of Imray-Iolaire charts, which shows the time of the meridian passage (or zenith) of the moon for this AND next month, will help you calculate the tides.

Water, Don explains, generally tries to run toward the moon. The tide starts running to the east soon after moonrise, continues to run east until about an hour after the moon reaches its zenith (see TIME below) and then runs westward. From just after the moon's setting to just after its nadir, the tide runs eastward; and from just after its nadir to soon after its rising, the tide runs westward; i.e. the tide floods from west to east. Times given are local.

Note: the maximum tide is 3 or 4 days after the new and full moons.

For more information, see "Tides and Currents" on the back of all Imray Iolaire charts. Fair tides!

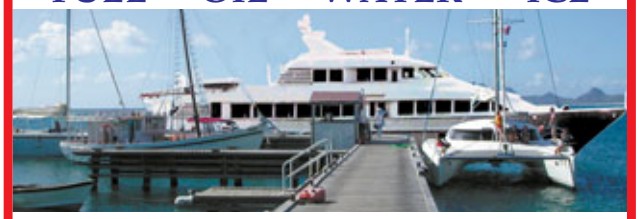
July		21	1356	11	0653
DATE	TIME	22	1443	12	0742
1	2213	23	1531	13	0831
2	2316	24	1620	14	0921
3	0000 (full)	25	1711	15	1011
4	0016	26	1805	16	1100
5	0113	27	1902	17	1149 (new)
6	0206	28	2001	18	1238
7	0226	29	2101	19	1327
8	0343	30	2201	20	1417
9	0427	31	2259	21	1508
10	0511	**August**		22	1602
11	0555	1	2354	23	1657
12	0639	2	0000 (full)	24	1755
13	0725	3	0045	25	1854
14	0812	4	0133	26	1953
15	0900	5	0220	27	2050
16	0949	6	0305	28	2144
17	1039	7	0349	29	2236
18	1129	8	0434	30	2325
19	1219 (new)	9	0519	31	0000 (full moon)
20	1307	10	0605		

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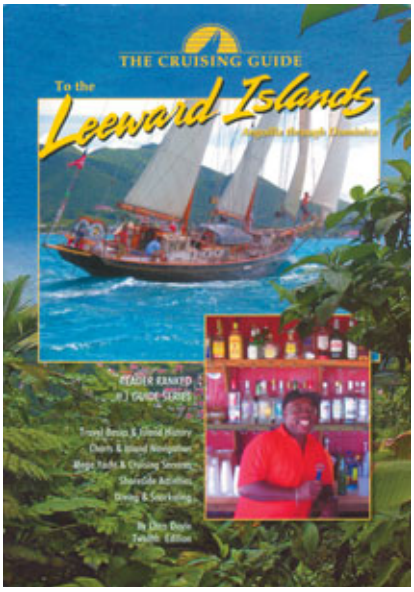


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LATEST LEEWARDS GUIDE

The 12th edition of Chris Doyle's *Cruising Guide to the Leeward Islands* is now available, detailing the part of the Eastern Caribbean island chain that runs some 200 miles from Anguilla to Dominica.

At 515 pages, this 2012-2013 edition is loaded with updated information on navigation (including GPS coordinates and inter-island sailing directions), Customs and



Immigration regulations, weather, communications and shore-side transportation, marinas, haul-out facilities, chandleries, provisioning and dining, and more. Snorkeling and diving sites and regulations are included for each island group.

Sketch charts are provided for most anchorages, as well as aerial photos of the most popular ones. Town maps are helpful when going ashore. Abundant original color photos by the author add a real feel of the different destinations in this diverse island group. The information about shore-side activities and services ranges from rainforest hikes to shopping, including such esoterica as who to call for lobsters in Barbuda, where to get a haircut in the Saintes, and how to find the weekly reggae night in Dominica.

Spiral binding lets the open book lie flat or fold backwards. A paperback, the cover is coated for longer wear in a boating environment, and an extra flap on the back cover makes a bookmark you'll never drop in the bilge. An extensive directory by island and service type, with full contact information for each listing, rounds out the book.

The Leewards contain more than a dozen very different islands: Anguilla, St. Martin/St. Maarten, St. Barts, Saba, Statia, St. Kitts, Nevis, Montserrat, Antigua, Barbuda, Guadeloupe, Marie Galante, the Saintes and Dominica. As Doyle writes in the book's Introduction, "It takes several months to explore the Leewards in depth, and only a lucky few will have that much time. Most will have to make choices about what they want to see…" so he has designed this book to help you make those decisions. And if you do have endless time to explore here, all the better.

It's not too early to start planning your next Leeward Islands cruise.

This book is available at bookshops and chandleries, and at www.cruisingguides.com.

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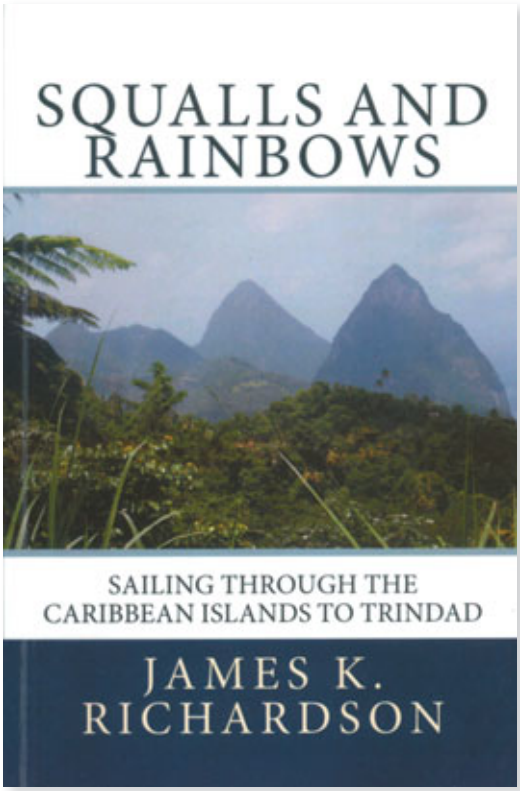
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BOOK REVIEW BY SALLY ERDLE

A Cruise, from the Scary to the Sublime

***Squalls and Rainbows: Sailing Through the Caribbean Islands to Trinidad**, by James K. Richardson. ©2011. Paperback, 215 pages, ISBN 978-0-9837181-0-9.*

Jim and Karin Richardson lived aboard sailboats for 15 years. Between cruises they lived aboard their different boats and worked in the Tampa-to-Sarasota area on the southwest coast of Florida.



Squalls and Rainbows is the story of their two-year voyage from Florida to Trinidad aboard their Tayana 37, *Nalani*. Embarking in 2005, after visiting the Exuma Islands they continued south to the Turks & Caicos, and then crossed to the Dominican Republic, where the story begins. (Jim has written about their Bahamian cruises in his book *White Cays and Blue Seas*.) The couple anchored for a time in Luperón Harbor and toured the Dominican Republic, then sailed east to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and south through the Leeward and Windward Islands to Trinidad.

Although chronological, and despite the fact that a number of chapters begin with "We left…", "We sailed…", "We motored…", or "We had just anchored…" *Squalls and Rainbows* is a cut above the usual cruiser's "we went here and then we went there" account of a voyage. (Full disclosure: Two of the chapters, Road of Smiles and Mayora, first appeared as articles in *Caribbean Compass*.) The author has a good eye for detail and an ear for dialogue that spices the narrative. On a taxi tour of St. Lucia, Richardson asks the driver:

"Why are there so many shoe stores in Castries?"

"They's a lot of feets in St. Lucia," he observed, flatly.

The typical self-published book's hiccups (the odd misspelling, wrong name, etcetera) are here, but not in abundance, and the author's wide-eyed and open-minded engagement with the new worlds he voluntarily enters keeps the story — and the reader's attention — moving along.

Jim and Karin enjoy sailing, exploring ashore, people and food. And Jim obviously enjoys sharing their experiences. Any cruiser will recognize the occasional surly Customs official and the friendly vendor, the crashing swell and the calm harbor, the too-predictable tourist attraction and the spine-tingling surprise discovery, the stomach butterflies when leaving on a challenging passage and the feeling of being a seasoned sailor when you arrive — worn out, sore and proud.

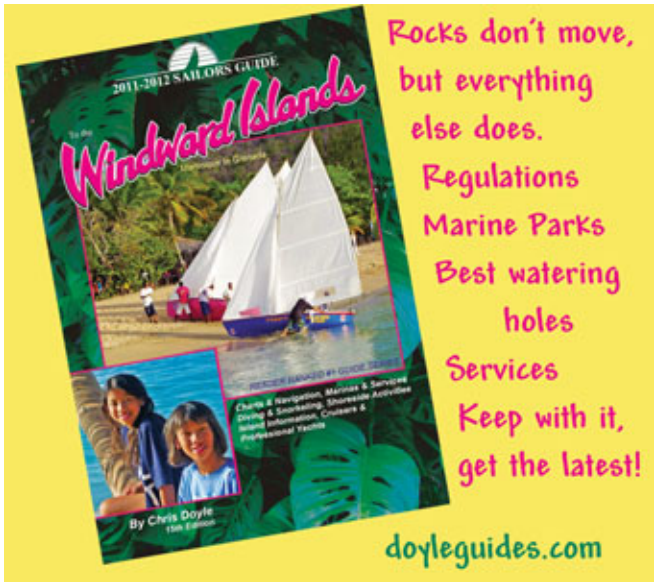
Although able to describe the tension of running from a hurricane, the tedium of engine maintenance, and the discomfort of being stuck in a rolly anchorage while waiting for a root canal, Richardson can also capture those sublime non-events that somehow define cruising:

This was perhaps our loveliest ocean sail ever. The water was purple, the sky blue, and the seas easy. We spotted a pod of whales, blowing and rolling on the surface, and then diving out of sight, tails to the sky. The magnificence of nature was awe-inspiring.

Near Devil's Point, Mayaguana, a fat, roasted sun dipped into the sea. We sat atop the cabin, wine glasses in hand, to witness the huge sphere dissolve into a pool of yellow-orange reflections across the horizon. When the sun succumbed to the sea, a green glow rose in its place, as if marking the spot. We had witnessed the green flash for the first time.

Cruising contains both squalls and rainbows; it might be said that one accents the other. Richardson shows you both.

This book is available at on-line booksellers. For more information see ad in the Market Place section, pages 42 through 45.



GOOD GUIDES ARE TIMELESS

Until Don Street wrote his first guide in 1964, the guide he used was Norie and Wilson's "Sailing Directions to the West Indies", published in 1867.



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In 1980 Street said in print that if anyone could come up with an anchorage safe for a boat that draws seven feet that he has not covered in the guide he would buy the drinks. Thirty-two years have gone by and he has never had to buy drinks.

Real sailors in the Windwards, Leewards and Virgin Islands circle in Street's Guide the anchorages that are **NOT** described in the other popular guides. Do the same and you will have quiet anchorages.

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Street's Guides are available at Island Water World and Johnson Marine Hardware in St. Lucia, Sully Magras in St. Barts, and Blue Water Books & Charts in Fort Lauderdale, or contact channelsales@authorsolutions.com

STUNNING UNDERWATER PHOTO TIP!

Many amazing underwater photos are taken in the extreme close-up. This setting on the camera is called macro. Learn to make this mode change without looking at the camera. For example, my Olympus Stylus Tough needs the "down" button pushed three times, then right once. By knowing this sequence I'm able to quickly change camera modes.
A close up of a Christmas Tree Worm reveals not only an interesting formation but also its mechanics of breathing and catching food.

Excerpt from "How to Take Stunning Underwater Photos Using Inexpensive Point and Shoot Cameras" by Scott Fratcher, available on Kindle, Apple, and ebook.

A TASTE OF ADVENTURE — UPSIDE DOWN

by Kody North

It was a warm sunny day in the Bahamas during the month of March, with not much wind and a few passing clouds, when Nathan, Dad, and I loaded the inflatable with our spears and fishing gear, and took off toward a reef four miles south of George Town. Dad skillfully guided the fast Avon inflatable through the chop. As we neared the reef, we cast a look towards it, and noticed we could not dive on the reef, owing to the ten-foot breakers marching over them. Dad slowed the RPMs, letting the stern sink as we slowed to a crawl. The spray ceased, letting a wave of foam roll and dissipate against the stern of the boat.

We discussed our options for a while, finally deciding against Plan A and headed for reef number two (Plan B). The engine regained speed and we headed off towards our new destination.

As we neared the second reef, Dad twisted the throttle back to neutral, angling the inflatable back as we slowed down. A small wave of foam collided with the stern again flattening us out into a slow forward motion, edging our nose onto the reef. Dad gave me an instruction and I quickly fitted some goggles to my face and pushed out all the air making a tight seal. I rolled over on my stomach and gripping the oarlock I plunked my head under the water and viewed the bottom. The visibility was terrible. Sand was swept off the bottom in clouds swirling around like a serpent. After a few moments, the sand began rolling into clouds that hung suspended, waiting for the next wave to whirl it around, like a cloud of mist when hit by a sudden gale. I squinted and barely made out the bottom.

After watching the bottom for a while, I popped my head up and confirmed to Dad that the reef looked good for fishing but the visibility was terrible. We thought we would give it a try, so once off the reef we rounded up again and bore off in the direction we had come.

Now with waves at our stern quarter, it was harder to see the waves coming and focus on the wave height. "This is a mistake," I thought to myself, but none had broken on the reef since we had been there so, I shrugged off the idea. That was a bad mistake, a very bad mistake. As we surfed down the backside of a wave and hit the next, a dreadful feeling arose from behind and a shiver ran up my spine. I whipped my head around, winging water droplets from my freshly wetted hair. My eyes widened as a wall of water 15 feet in height curled and hissed overhead, throwing foam as it began to break. "You should have said something, Kody," I thought. Time slowed to a crawl as surprise turned to awe, and then to action. As if by instinct, I turned to dive in. Just before I went under I heard the high-pitched sound of the engine at full RPM, then as if on cue it abruptly stopped. I hit the water and the last thing I saw was the dinghy flying overhead and then disappearing along with the wave.

I quickly surfaced, spotting Dad and Nathan. Dad shouted, "Head for the boat!" I turned and started swimming for the boat in a fast but steady crawl. I grabbed the dinghy and turned to see the whereabouts of Nathan and Dad. As Nathan neared the inflatable I grabbed him by the life vest and pulled him to the dinghy, which was upside down. I turned again and spotted Dad collecting fins and oars. When Dad reached the boat he dumped all six fins and two oars on top. With a stern but steady voice Dad gave directions to put our fins on and kick like madmen.

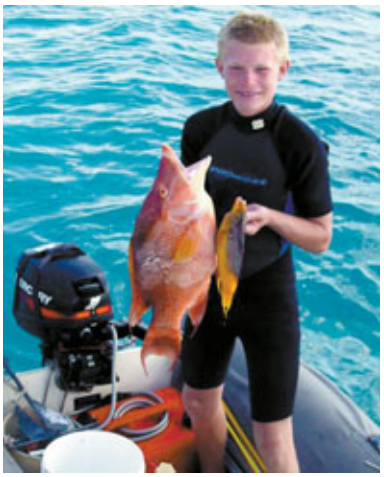
We all paddled in silence for a moment, running through our heads what just happened, and what we just lost, or then again, what we might lose.

The day was just getting worse. The tide was going out and we were a good half-mile from the closest landmass and then another unknown number of feet to a beach where we could flip the dinghy. The tide really concerned me. If we couldn't swim against the out-going tide then we would be dead. Once out in the sea it would be very hard, if not impossible, to swim against all the currents, winds and waves. Not to mention the fact that we would get tired and we had no food or water. The dinghy was upside down, we would have to try to stay on the slippery top or stay in the water and hold on. Staying in the water for days would be a good way to catch hypothermia, especially when the wind blows.

All this was floating around my brain when Dad broke the silence. "We have to get the dinghy through that cut up ahead and around the point and hope that there's a beach or shallows where we can flip it."

Nathan and I agreed and had resumed kicking when Dad slipped into the water and went under the boat. "What are you doing?" I asked. But he had already gone under. He reappeared and let out a heavy sigh. "What's wrong?" I asked. "Radio's gone." "Crap."

I looked up at a passing airplane, trying to shake off the growing burning sensation in my ankles as I kicked the wavy surface. We moved at an agonizingly slow pace, but foot by foot we closed the gap to the cut.



The author at age 13, on a better dinghy day

After a long and tiresome swim we finally rounded the point. I let out a sigh, knowing we were in the Bahamas to stay. A few minutes later, Dad touched bottom and Nathan and I jumped in. We towed the dinghy to about waist-deep water and then Nathan ran the fins in to the beach so we didn't have to hold them. "You ready?" Dad asked, gesturing towards the dinghy. I understood right away and we hefted it right side up with ease. To our surprise out popped two life vests and our air pump.

Dad took the bow, "Let's get this dinghy up on the beach," he said. "You see that abandoned house up there, on the top of that hill? I need you and Nate to go up there and see if there are any wrenches left behind that can pull out a spark plug."

As soon as the dinghy hit the beach, Nathan and I took off toward a dock we had noticed coming in. This Bahaman island was moon rock and thick brush, so we had to find a path if we expected to get to the house.

Nathan and I ran along the rocky trail with our bare feet for a good 20 minutes before coming to a dead end at a low flat marsh. "What do you see?" came a familiar voice. I spun around and saw Dad huffing it up the trail. "Nothing. I don't even see a trail that leads on from here," I replied. "Great," he said after checking it out for himself. "Well, we better get back to the dinghy and try to get those spark plugs out before the outboard turns to a bucket of rust."

Twenty minutes later we were back on the beach. We fiddled with the engine for a good 30 minutes more, trying to get the water out of the cylinders, but had no luck.

"Hey, Dad?" came Nathan's voice.

"What?" Dad said, turning his head.

"How did the water get in the cylinders in the first place?"

"It came in through the... car-bur-e-torrrr," Dad said his voice trailing off. "Wow, that's a great idea, you know that?"

"What? I'm confused," I said.

"The motor!" Dad said. "Let's get this motor upside down so the water can drain out through the carburetor. Here Kody, help me open the choke when I lift the motor."

Twenty minutes passed and the outboard was sitting on the back of the dinghy once again and we were pushing it out into open water. Ten minutes after that, frustration had crept into us because the engine was still not turning over and time was running out. We had no water, no food, no way to contact anyone, and we were at least four miles away from any source of help.

"It's acting as if there is still water in the cylinders," I said.

"I know; I can't figure it out," Dad answered in a very concerned voice.

"Hey look!" Nathan was pointing at the kill switch. It was in the off position.

"All right, Nathan!" Dad flicked the kill switch back to "run" and pulled the cord. It didn't fire on the first try but came to life on the tenth try. We jumped in and prepared for the three-hour, four-mile long trip home.

It really did take us three hours because the engine would only run at idle speed, due to the fact we were only running on one cylinder. (We figured that out when a mechanic looked at it later). Halfway there, the engine started to bog down like it had water in the gas, but then acted normal again. Not five minutes later it did it again. This time I had an idea. "Hey, Dad. Water is more dense than gas, right?"

"Right."

"And the fuel pick-up is at the bottom of the tank, right?"

Dad was already one step ahead of me. "All we have to do is take the hose off the intake valve and put it in the fill," Dad said.

"Then we will be sucking pure gas!" Dad and I said in unison.

About a week later we went back to that same reef with our new engine, looking for our stuff. We found everything accept our goggles, underwater camera, diving gloves, spare sling for our spears, and our booties.

From that point on, I've always respected the ocean's power along with her beauty and will never underestimate her. The day we went back to the reef, I actually wasn't worried because I knew that it was our mistake that we came so close to being sucked out to sea, not the ocean's mistake. I will always respect and love the sea for her power, beauty and her ability to catch even the saltiest of seafarers off guard. Like in a good Tom Clancy novel, you can never predict what is going to happen next.

Kody North is now a 22-year-old student at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy. He says, "I lived aboard my folks' sailboat along with my younger brother for two years back in 2003-2005. I was between the ages of 13 and 15, and during those years my family and I experienced many adventures that have opened my eyes to an extent beyond that of written description. I kept a journal of these adventures and this is one from its pages."

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BOUNTIES OF THE BEACH

by Rosie Burr

Beachcombing is one of those wonderful activities that costs us nothing in an age where there is a price for everything. It is good for us not only in terms of a little exercise and fresh air but it soothes the mind and soul; call it beach therapy if you like. You can come away with treasures that are free and at the same time you can give back to the environment by picking up a little garbage as you go.



Above: Good beachcombing. Search among the seaweed for fascinating finds, and remove a little rubbish while you're at it

Below: 'I could spend hours walking on a beach hunting for shells'



The Oxford dictionary's definition of beachcomber is a person who searches the beach for valuable items. The word first appeared in Herman Melville's novel *Omoo* in 1847 where he describes European settlers in the South Pacific Islands "combing" the beach and nearby waters for flotsam and jetsam.

For thousands of years the ocean currents have been carrying around drift seeds and driftwood before depositing them on beaches. In the grand old age of sail, galleons or other seagoing vessels that came to grief on reefs or in storms had their bounties washed ashore to be rifled through later.

One of the biggest finds in more modern times was by a beachcomber on the east coast of Florida who found, after Tropical Storm Henri had passed through, a 24-carat gold, jeweled box that contained a rosary with a ruby cross and emerald beads. It was valued at US$300,000 and is believed to have come from either a Portuguese or Spanish galleon.

But apart from finding Spanish booty what else can you expect to find? All sorts of wonders get washed up onto Caribbean beaches. The ubiquitous seashells are the first thing that comes to mind, in all sorts of shapes and sizes with amazing colors and patterns making them one of nature's most remarkable creations. I could spend hours walking on a beach hunting for shells and found some of my favorites washed ashore on beaches in the morning before anyone else is around.

There are drift seeds and sea beans that ancient mariners used as good luck charms. On the Caribbean beaches of Mexico and Belize I found lots of sea beans of various varieties, fallen from tropical trees and carried down rivers and out into the ocean currents. These treasures included a couple of the rare Mary's Bean, with the shape of a cross etched on one side. Sea beans are harder to find in the Eastern Caribbean, which makes them all the more precious when you do.

Driftwood and sea glass come in all sorts wonderful shapes to make into jewelry or displays for your shelves. My husband (in his romantic days) once etched "Be My Valentine" in a piece of driftwood and gave it to me for Valentine's Day.

All sorts of treasures and curiosities are to be found. If Mother Nature's bounty is not to your fancy perhaps you'll find other curiosities. We have found beach towels, odd flip-flops (but sadly never a pair!), sunglasses and small plastic toys. Of more use are old gallon containers that make great dinghy bailers; fenders that, after the odd barnacle had been removed, become the pride of the fender fleet; a cockpit cushion that turned out to be one of our own and some star-board that now is an excellent outboard engine mount.

Perhaps a cargo ship will lose a container in a storm: more than 10,000 containers fall overboard each year for you to find their contents eventually washed up ashore — anything from rubber ducks to bits of Lego or Nike trainers, according to statistics in *National Geographic*, even intact packets of Doritos chips.

The best times to go beachcombing are at low tide, early in the morning and after a storm. A windward beach is always good but not necessary. Walk along the beach and rummage through the line of debris known as *wrack*; shells and sea beans often get hidden amongst the washed-up seaweed. Be careful of your feet if you are not wearing shoes. You should never kill any creatures living in a shell or destroy their natural habitat. Find out in advance if the area you want to comb is protected and in a 'no take' zone. Do not take anything from these protected areas and make sure you are aware of any pertinent local regulations of the country you are in. If you find an item that might have washed ashore from a boat, make an effort to find its owner. Make sure you are aware of your surroundings, of how quickly a tide can come in, the state of the sea, of sea urchins washed ashore or rocky or slippery surfaces or manmade debris like broken glass or rusty nails.

Sadly, it is not only just rubber ducks and drift seeds floating around with the ocean currents and being deposited on beaches but rubbish as well. For every shell or sea bean you will find umpteen plastic bags and bottles, broken toys, shoes, fishing line, balloons, straws, polystyrene cups and an assortment of other items — the list is endless. So practice a bit of good karma while you are walking on the beach collecting your treasures from Mother Nature. Do a little for her in return: take a spare bag and collect some rubbish. It doesn't have to be a lot, especially if you are living on a boat trying to keep your trash to a minimum. Make it an enjoyable process, bring friends with you and post your collection on websites like the Australian Two Hands Project (see website below) whose motto is "30 minutes, two hands, anywhere, anytime" and displays photos of their beach clean-ups on their blog and Facebook page. If there is too much trash to deal with, prioritize what is going to cause most damage to wildlife — small bits of plastic, six-pack rings, netting, fishing filament or hooks. Anything you can take away is a step in the right direction. Find out if there are beach clean-ups going on in your area or organize one for the upcoming events — and beachcomb as you go!

Basic Rules for Safe Beachcombing

- Never kill anything.
- Make sure nothing is living in what you take.
- Take nothing from a protected area.
- Be aware of the regulations of the country you are in.
- Be careful of the environment around you; wear shoes if necessary. Keep a watch for rough seas or incoming tides, slippery or rocky surfaces, and manmade rubbish.
- Wear sun protection.
- Pick up some rubbish as you go.
- Have fun!

Useful Resources
www.twohandsproject.org
www.unesco.org/csi/pub/source/ero23.htm
www.greenantilles.com



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The Sky in July 2012

by Scott Welty

The Planets in July

MERCURY - Begins the month at nearly maximum elongation to the east of the Sun in Cancer. Look for it just after sunset. Moving toward the Sun as the month wears on.

VENUS - Yep, that pretty morning star in the east is Venus. Enjoy!

EARTH - Feels like things are spinning out of control.

MARS - Already up at nightfall. Setting between 2300 hours and 2200 hours in Virgo.

JUPITER - Also a morning star and partnered with Venus all month! Get up!

SATURN - Rising around noon and setting around midnight. In Virgo.

Sky Events This Month

3rd - Full Moon

15th - Moon, Venus, Jupiter in the early morning (Figure 1)

19th - New Moon

24th - Moon - Mars - Saturn (Figure 2)

28th - 29th - Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower (see below)

August 1st - Full Moon

Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower

Of course you can happen to see a 'shooting star' any night but there are times during the year when the Earth passes through a region of meteors and the probability of seeing a shooting star goes up significantly. This particular meteor shower doesn't have a well-defined peak like others do, hence I spread the view time over two days. Best time for viewing is after moon set (~ 0100 hours) and before dawn. Meteors will seem to emanate from the south from the star Delta Aquarii (also called Skat). This shower is better viewed in the tropical latitudes so lucky us! Expect up to 15 meteors per hour.

July - Time to Stare at the Milky Way

In Figure 3 I've enhanced the Milky Way and reduced the number of stars. So, it won't look exactly like that but will be positioned like that. Our July view at night is toward the very center of our home galaxy. Best to look on clear nights with no moon. Its name is from the way it looks like clouds or milk but that's not what it is. The Milky Way looks milky because the stars are so numerous and so distant that individual stars cannot be resolved with the naked eyeball. Of course the stars are actually light years apart but from HERE they look inseparable. You're looking at maybe 100 billion stars that stretch across a disk 100,000 light years in diameter. There are some noticeable dark swaths within the Milky Way due to intervening gas and dust absorbing some of the light from more distant stars.

We know that the Milky Way is a spiral arm galaxy and we are about two-thirds of the way out on one of the arms. The whole contraption spins at a rate depending on how far from the central hub one might be. Our Sun orbits the central hub of the galaxy (much like the Earth orbits the Sun) once every 225 MILLION years. So, last time we were in this position was around the time of the giant dinosaur extinction. By the next time around the Chicago Cubs will have won a World Series (maybe!). Actually every star you see in the sky is a member of the Milky Way. They are just far more numerous in one direction due to the shape of our galaxy being a flattened thin spiral disk. The disk is quite thin in proportion with the thickness being only 1/100th of the diameter. Think of a quarter-inch thick, circular sheet of plywood 25 inches in diameter and you have the scale model.

There is a bar and dome shaped central hub and the center of this is thought to contain a super massive black hole. One can tell from the strong radio emissions (from debris falling into the black hole) and the motion of stars near the center. This black hole has the mass of 4 or 5 MILLION suns compacted into a mathematical dot. Yow!

To Contemplate While Having a Glass of Wine on Deck

Of course the latest news is that maybe half of the stars in the Milky Way have planets. How many of those have water or life? How many have cable?

FIGURE 1



FIGURE 2

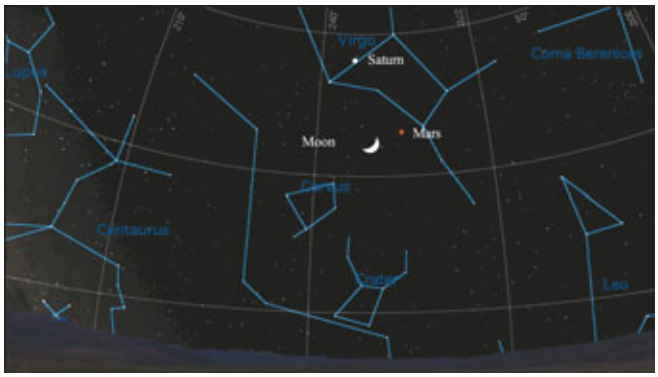
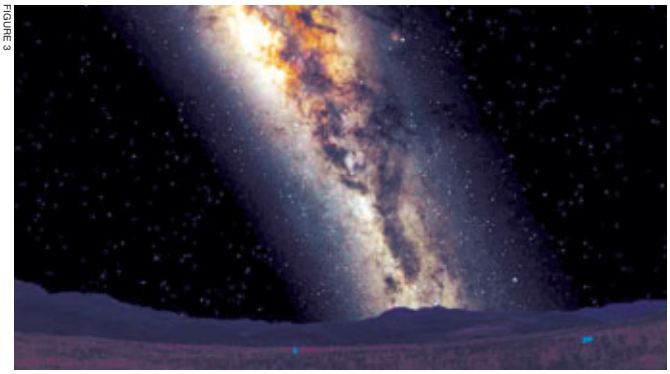


FIGURE 3





A Marvelous Meatless Day

There are good Fish Fridays and then there are great Fish Fridays. If you aren't on an island such as St. Lucia, Barbados or Grenada, where a public Fish Friday is happening, you can do it yourself. Fried sardines with "provision", plantain balls and a simple salad make one of the best Caribbean meatless meals. If it sounds like too much work, get each of your buddy boats to make one dish, then gang up for your own authentic Fish Friday island feast.

"Provision" is an umbrella term for many tubers and root crops, such as dasheen, tannia, eddoes, sweet potatoes, yams, etcetera.

Many readers are now turning up their noses at the thought of sardines. We're not talking about the tinned ones here. No other fish can quite compare with a stack of these fresh, well-cleaned and seasoned, small silver-sided fish. Ask for fresh sardines in the market; they should be gutted. If you can't get them, any small, oily fish such as smelts (about six to eight whole fish per pound) will do.

To clean, hold the fish by the tail on a cutting board and scrape off the scales (there will not be many) with a knife. Do this ashore, or on deck. Wash the fish with cold water.

Shirley's Fried Sardines
2 pounds sardines, as fresh as possible, cleaned
salt
green seasoning
1 Cup oil (for frying)
1 egg
1/2 Cup milk
1 Cup flour

Season whole fish with salt and bottled green seasoning (buy this in any West Indian market); put everything into a plastic bag and let it marinate in the fridge at least an hour before frying.

Heat the oil in a sizable skillet. Combine egg and milk in a small bowl. Drain sardines, dip in the milk-and-egg mixture, and then dredge in flour. Sardines should retain a thin coating of flour. Once the oil is hot, carefully drop in the sardines, a few at a time, and fry until golden brown. Continue process until all are fried.

Fried sardines are terrific on hops bread dressed with thin cucumber slices and your favorite condiments.



Boiled and Fried Provision
1 dasheen peeled and sliced into one-inch-thick circles
1 1/2 pounds of yam, peeled and chopped into one-inch cubes
2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled, and sliced into one-inch-thick circles
1 1/2 pound cassava, peeled and halved, removing the core string
3 tannia, peeled and sliced
1 Tablespoon salt
2 pimentos, whole
2 Tablespoons cooking oil
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 medium onion, chopped small
1 teaspoon Golden Ray margarine (or butter)
chopped chives for garnish

Put all the provision in a pot and cover with water. Add salt and pimentos. Bring to a boil and then simmer for 20 minutes. Drain and reserve pimentos. Set provision aside.

In the same pot add oil and bring to a medium heat. Add garlic, onion and the pimentos. Sauté, crushing the pimentos with a spoon. Add the boiled provision and the Golden Ray margarine, frying slightly. Stir ingredients again, remove to serving plate and garnish with chives.



Plantain Balls
3 pounds ripe (not over-ripe) plantains
4 cloves garlic, minced
3 leaves chadon bene, minced
1 small onion, chopped small
2 small pimentos, seeded and minced
salt and spices to taste
1/4 Cup seasoned breadcrumbs

Place unpeeled plantains in a medium pot and cover with water. Add salt and boil covered for ten minutes, remove and stick with a knife. If knife goes through easily, the plantain is ready to drain.

Peel plantains and put in a large bowl. With a sturdy fork, spoon, or potato masher — and even using your hands — smash plantain as finely as possible. Remove all lumps. Combine plantain with all other ingredients except the breadcrumbs, and mix as if kneading flour. Break mixture into palm-sized pieces and roll into balls about two inches in diameter. Then roll balls into seasoned breadcrumbs. Bake in the oven for ten minutes at 350°F. Serve hot or cold.

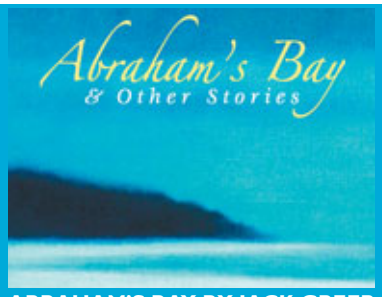
Simple Salad
1 cucumber, peeled and sliced
3 tomatoes, sliced
1/2 head of lettuce, chopped into one-inch pieces
1/2 medium red onion, sliced into thin strips

In a bowl combine everything. Dress with your favorite dressing, or something as simple as fresh lemon juice.





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You *Can* Cruise Safely in the Summer

Chris Doyle Puts It All on the (Zip) Line

It's Watermelon Time — Fried? Really?

... and more!



GAS WARNINGS
Dear *Compass*,

Stephanie Trotter (*Compass* Readers' Forum May 2012) is quite right to stress the danger of carbon monoxide. One afternoon after lunch I had a pot of curry simmering on a low flame and I laid down on the saloon settee for a nap. The boat was closed up with the air-con on. Sometime later I woke from a very deep sleep feeling extremely groggy and lethargic. I just wanted to go back to sleep but a tiny alarm buried at the back of my mind warned me something was wrong. I reluctantly forced myself to sit up and immediately my mind cleared. I realized that carbon monoxide had risen in the boat to the level of the settee and I had narrowly avoided death by curry! Since then I never sleep with the stove on. Note that a faulty exhaust leaking carbon monoxide on a boat motoring closed up in dirty weather could also kill off-watch sleepers.

Carbon monoxide is produced when propane or any other hydrocarbon burns (e.g. in a stove burner), along with water vapour. It is odorless, colourless, and heavier than air so it sinks to the bottom of the boat. It makes you drowsy and eventually kills you without you being aware of its presence. It's the same thing as committing suicide by piping a car exhaust into the car.

Also in my article "Cooking Gas Explosion Kills Two" (*Compass* March 2012) I extolled the solenoid valve as a safety precaution for gas systems. After the article was published I happened by chance to turn off the solenoid on my boat before turning off the stove knob (contrary to my usual practice). I saw that the burner flame went lower but didn't go out! The solenoid wasn't closing completely and was therefore completely useless as a safety device. It turned out to have a minute piece of Teflon in the valve seat. So please check frequently that your solenoid is operating correctly by turning it off first and watching the flame.

Cris Robinson
Ondine

STAYING PUMPED
Dear *Compass*,

My parents, Harold and Kwailan, and I are from Trinidad & Tobago. We are double world circumnavigators on our home-built boats, *Humming Bird II* and *Humming Bird III*. On the first voyage I was a boy, five to nine years old, and on the second, an adult, 20 to 22 years old.

We were recently passing Grenada's Long Point Shoal on the inside, aboard *Humming Bird III*, when the engine started making a funny noise. I rushed below to check on it and found that the raw water pump wasn't spinning properly and was leaking water at an uncomfortable rate. We already had the mainsail up, so we hoisted the jib and negotiated our way to Point Saline without troubling the seabed of the shoal.

It was about quarter to five in the afternoon, May 16th, and my father, my cousin Gavin, and I were sailing home to Trinidad after my father had been in Grenada for about a month and a half already. Gavin and I had flown in two days earlier, and the engine had given no hint of trouble before we had set off from the Grenada Yacht Club. After shutting down the engine, we decided to keep going as the breeze was an average 15 knots, and the sea was relatively calm. *Humming Bird III*, a 55-foot ketch, could have used a bit more of a blow to really get going, but conditions were nice, and we didn't mind going a little slower for a tranquil night's crossing.

We decided not to fix the water pump at night, and to use the hours till morning trying to think up a solution to the problem. The pump itself had apparently broken a seal and/or a bearing, and had become uncoupled from the engine link that kept it turning. We thought of ways to re-link the coupling, but the pump probably would have leaked even worse, or disintegrated altogether. One alternative was to not repair anything and just sail through the Boca de Monos when we got there. But this narrow channel (the entrance to the Gulf of Paria most frequently used by yachts) has notoriously strong currents and fickle winds, and, while it was nothing we could not do, it would have made the journey much longer time-wise. We didn't want to trouble anyone for a tow if we could help it, so we decided to find a way to by-pass the raw water pump, and supply cooling water to the engine.

We had a bilge pump running off a pulley on the engine, and we had a pump that ran the refrigerator cooling water. Either could be used, with the re-routing of hoses, to send water to the engine, but there were certain difficulties in fulfilling either of these options. Then my father remembered he had an old electric pump he had acquired for free years ago, with which he sometimes used to transfer water from one tank to the next. It already had a long electrical cord on it with two alligator clips for easy attachment to the battery. Shortly after dawn, with the breeze dying, and still about 12 miles from the Boca, we set about the challenge of finding some appropriate hoses and the points of attachment for them.

Fortunately, we had a variety of old hoses that my father had refused to throw away over the years. One never knows when yesterday's junk may become tomorrow's problem solver. Thus we found a hose that we ran from a T-joint just after the main seacock, to



the inlet side of our electric jury-pump. From the pump's outlet side to the engine required three hoses joined together, each slightly larger than the previous one, as the diameter had to be stepped up where the last hose met the engine. From here the salt water would go into the heat exchanging tubes as it normally would were it being sent by the original pump. We attached the jury-pump's alligator clips to the main battery and immediately water started moving through the engine keeping it at the normal operating temperature. We knew this because our eyes hardly left the temperature gauge for the rest of the trip, which was about three hours more.

We were not sure whether the jury-pump was designed to run for a long continuous period, so we were apprehensive that it might burn out. But it did yeoman service, and when after about an hour it finally started getting hot, my father played nurse by putting a damp rag on the motor and wetting it slightly every ten minutes or so. That's how he kept it cool till we got through the Boca and finally to the dock. Our trip took about 18 hours, instead of the usual 12, but without the jury-pump it might have taken 24 due to the dying breeze. We celebrated our little contraption with cold Stags all around before setting off to the Customs and Immigration offices. Cheers to a little ingenuity and old handy equipment.

Pierre La Borde
Trinidad

CRUISERS' EPIC RUN
Dear *Compass*,

July 28th begins an epic adventure for fellow cruisers, Katharine and David Lowrie of *Lista Light*. They will run unsupported the 5,000-mile length of South America!

My husband, Jim, and I were pirated 40 miles off Venezuela in October 2010. On the heels of this, we pondered deeply the *why* of piracy. International cruisers and local Venezuelan businesspeople responded to our news with innuendo against Hugo Chavez and what they called "his failed dictatorship". The US media had been rife with negative reports on Venezuela throughout the eight-year Bush administration. Though we know poverty plays a role, why is violence against cruisers so much greater off Venezuela than, say, Dominica, which has a lower average income per capita? I'm ashamed to admit that we bought into the easy explanation that Chavez was at the root of the problem.

Scroll ahead to 2012. It was about this same time that two things happened. Steve from *Nonesuch* told us we were full of s--- related to our view of the Chavez administration. Secondly, Dave and Katharine Lowrie approached me to assist with the North American marketing of their extraordinary South American 5000 Mile Project. *Bing!*

—Continued on next page

—*Continued from previous page*

Educating myself on South America, its history, current affairs, geography and economy began in earnest. I find that the Venezuelan economy has improved under the democratically elected President Chavez. He advocates that all his citizens speak English, that all children especially girls get a college education and his socialist efforts have reduced both poverty and extreme poverty in Venezuela.

This letter is a one-two punch, encouraging *Compass* readers to educate themselves about our neighbors south of the border in a unique, fun way. Follow the *Lista Light* crew as they get off their 50-plus-year-old wooden schooner for 18 months. They will be surveying wildlife and eco-systems, teaching about eco-systems in the elementary schools along the way and blogging to inform the rest of us.

Lista Light took Dave and Katharine across the Atlantic to the Caribbean only three years ago. They were the ones who first introduced me to the idea of participating in a Grenada "hash" run in 2009. As ecologists, they conducted seabird counts and gave lectures to Caribbean school children. They exited through the Panama Canal last year and have nearly finished their circumnavigation of South America. That wasn't enough. With love of running, nature, and wild places, their imaginations were lit for surveying South American wildlife, conditions of the wild places and the people who live in those regions.

Why not do it running? Why not bring South America's plight to the attention of those on the other side of the Equator? Actually, anyone can tune in. They need only an internet connection. Dave and Katharine will begin running in late July from Patagonia. It will be a vicarious trek for us, but more importantly a chance to learn more about our South American neighbors. Katharine and Dave's zeal benefits us all.

Teasing Katharine, whose maiden name was Land: "Of course. Righto. You love the sea, but you must Land. You must conduct Land study."

From this cruiser's point of view, Katharine and Dave are doing something very admirable. They inspire me to be as conscientious environmentally and physically fit as I can be — to take every hike, to eat local and in-season produce, to reduce, reuse, recycle. Kath's recent article "Blue Meets Green" in womenandcruising.org is a "must read".

Check in with our fellow cruisers, the crew of *Lista Light*, at www.5000mileproject.org.

As Chief Seattle said, "Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect."

From my sticky little spot amidst the web,
Ellen Birrell
Boldly Go

TRINIDAD RENDEZVOUS?
Dear Compass Readers,

We sold our sailboat, *Maja III*, in Trinidad some time ago and have since become real landlubbers in Canada, complete with snowshoes, "toques" and mitts. We did revisit Trinidad a couple of years ago to see friends and were surprised to see once again the Land of Dragons and also an African Grey parrot named Rubbish. It would be nice to see them once again.

Which leads me to the reason for the letter. We have booked passage with the great sailboat in the sky to visit Trinidad one more time, in September 2012.

If anyone else is contemplating a visit to this wonderful island, this would be a good opportunity to get together and see some of the sights and taste some of the delights the locals have to offer. (The fresh vegetables and fruits are incredible!) We are going to visit with probably the best unpaid ambassador of Trinidad, Jesse James (and of course his wife, Sharon Rose) of Members Only taxi and tour service. We are not sure what we will be doing, but it could be anything from hiking through the rainforest, visiting a beach, watching leatherback turtles, maybe going to a concert or even the racetrack (we used to go with Lady Charlie). Or we could just play bridge or "lime" (drinking optional). Doubles, roti and Richard's world famous shark and bake a must.



I am not going to recommend any one particular marina as there are several to choose from and I don't know of a bad one. Or you can anchor or hitch to a mooring.

As to any security issues, no one would pretend this island like any other is crime-free but the advantage of the Trinidad cruising community is that it is contained within the area of Chaguaramas, which is basically only accessible by sea or by one road and has a large presence of Coast Guard and Navy people. While it always pays to be cautious wherever you are, one can easily see the safety advantages of these marinas.

If you are interested in exploring, give Members Only a call and maybe we'll get to see y'all!

Graham and Denise Groucott
Formerly of *Maja III*

Dear* Compass *Readers,

We want to hear from YOU!

Be sure to include your name, boat name or shoreside address, and a way we can contact you (preferably by e-mail) if clarification is required.

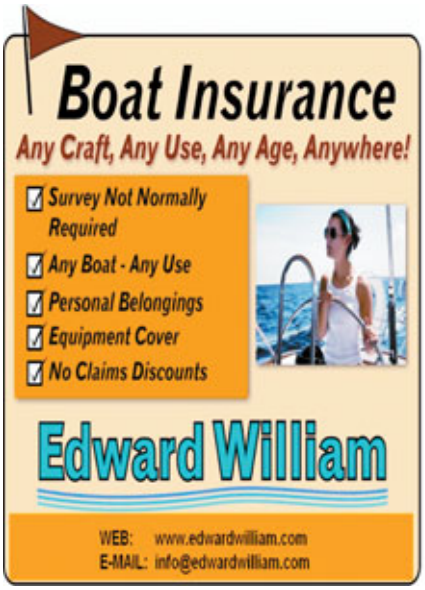
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Letter of the Month

Dear *Compass*,

An incident of piracy occurred on June 2nd off Punta Sal, Honduras. Please find my letter to the American Ambassador with the details.

The Honorable Lisa Kubiske
United State Ambassador to Honduras
Tegucigalpa
Dear Ambassador Kubiske,

On Saturday morning, June 2nd at approximately 8:30AM, my sailing vessel, US-flagged *Southern Star*, registered in Delaware, was intercepted and boarded by two young men, who threatened us with a large pistol and took off money, jewelry and equipment with a value in excess of US$11,000.

Bound for Utila in the Gulf of Honduras, having spent the evening in Puerto Cortes, we took the direct line which brings one close to the coast, approximately three miles north off Punta Sal, approximately halfway between our starting point and our destination of Utila.

The two young men were in a 20-foot *lancha*. My wife was at the helm and I was below, resting, when I heard some commotion and found my wife trying to convince the two young men to stay away as they were asking for some gasoline. Then the older of the two, an extremely handsome young man, almost beautiful, displayed the large-caliber pistol and we reverted to our "New York smarts," trying to be as calm as possible and to express no resistance to our captives.

I was ordered to sit where the younger of the two threatened me with a machete while my wife, with a gun to her head, was ordered to produce "moony, moony."

He went up and down several times taking US cash, a large roll of Honduran notes, two backpacks — one containing my wife's jewelry, a computer, cell phone, bankbook and two cameras. Returning to the deck, he took our rolled-up dinghy and starting yelling: "mooter, mooter." We tried to explain to him that the strange-looking device on our stern was the motor (a Torqeedo electric) and he wound up taking two of the three pieces.

The last portion was the strangest, like robbing Santa's gift bag. He pulled out anything he saw and threw it in the lancha: a pair of West Marine flip-flops, a blue five-gallon water jug, fishing gear, oars, kayak paddles.

Then, with a final instruction to start our engine, they motored speedily away in the direction of Puerto Escondido.

During the entire event, my wife was physically held from behind with a firearm pressed against her neck and threatened with death if cooperation was not complete and expedient. They even made us take our wedding and engagement rings off our fingers.

At the conclusion of this event, which, if I am not mistaken, is the classic definition of piracy, we called for assistance from the Honduran Coast Guard via VHF channel 16. I understand that the US Coast Guard also monitors this channel as well, but they never answered our call.

We were instructed by what we think was Puerto Cortes harbor control to proceed back to that port and four hours later were greeted there by Immigration, police and the civil maritime officials, the latter taking the lead in questioning us. They were extraordinarily polite and helpful, especially agent Ricardo Hernandez of the Port Capitan's office who drove us around to the various authorities as we were checked in and out of the country and spent the afternoon assisting the police and translating for us with regard their report. It was made clear that there is no police presence anywhere near the crime scene nor in the adjacent village and that there would likely be no investigation.

We anchored in our familiar spot near the Navy pier and left early the next morning, returning to our base in Rio Dulce, Guatemala. There would be no more sailing for us this season.

Conclusions

I have great concern that the ease with which we were overcome, the munificent haul and the anticipated subsequent lack of pressure from the authorities will encourage additional such activity by this group or copycats. If a bunch of kids with a big firearm can get thousands of dollars of booty without the least chance of apprehension, then this coast has the potential for further mayhem and violence.

Although there was no violence with regard this incident, an important reason for that was our immediate "Stockholm" approach. Not every boater will take that tack.

The police in Puerto Cortes appear to be under-funded, ill-equipped and completely ill-suited to do anything more than to complete a report with regard the incident, and even that was a trial — no computers, no knowledge of the area where the incident occurred, I was led to believe perhaps no roads, though less than 30 miles away.

This is the same general area where a Canadian sailor was killed last year. It now must be regarded as of dubious safety.

And yet, Roatan/Utila/Rio Dulce is a main pathway for craft returning to Rio Dulce for hurricane season. It would be prudent that mariners be warned.

Very sincerely,
Michael S. Feldman
Southern Star

WHAT'S ON MY MIND

Time to Stop Whaling in Bequia

by Louise Mitchell Joseph

None of the OECS countries, except St. Vincent & the Grenadines, is known to have any interest in killing large whales. At a recent meeting in Kingstown our Whaling Commissioner boasted, "SVG is the smallest whaling nation and the only country in the OECS that is a whaling nation." No offence to the Commissioner, but he should think that bragging that ours is the only Latin American and Caribbean country that is killing these magnificent mammals that nurture their young in the same manner as human mothers, is not to our credit. His disclosure that SVG is proposing an amendment of its International Whaling Commission (IWC) quota to 24 from 20, due to an extension of the quota period, is a move in the wrong direction. It is a backward move.



Whaleboats on the beach at Friendship Bay some 30 years ago

Under the IWC rules, SVG has permission to take 20 humpback whales over the period 2008-2012. This allocation is in response to a claim that our "aboriginal" people in Bequia traditionally depend on whales for food. IWC quotas are meant to be based on "relevant stocks from which indigenous groups, whose needs have been recognized by the IWC, can take whales". However, the government of SVG has never provided a statement in support of its "aboriginal" quota.

Evidence of SVG's poor reporting on its whaling activities is the statement made last year by the UK Commissioner to the IWC who said about SVG: "We expressed our disappointment at IWC63 at the lack of adequate data to support the aboriginal hunts of North Atlantic humpback whales off St Vincent & the Grenadines".

We also know that rules are not consistently applied and enforced in SVG over how whales — and what whales — are hunted and killed. For instance, our country is specifically forbidden to hunt and kill calves. Yet, it is normal for whalers to first target calves, wounding or killing them so as to attract their mothers, in utter violation of the international guidelines under which whales should be taken for food. The practice is a shameful stain on our nation.

Hon. Saboto Caesar, Minister of Fisheries, said at the opening of the recent whaling meeting in Kingstown that whaling in Bequia is for the purposes of "food security." How an average of one whale killed per year could be necessary for "food security" in Bequia is very puzzling. What is certain is that eating whale meat in Bequia is not necessary for human survival there. The minister also said, "Our whalers hunt in small open boats, using sails, and the objective is to secure our food." That is a tale of ancient times, unrelated to what actually occurs in modern-day Bequia. He did not recognize that for years it has been reported that speedboats are used to assist the sailboats in the whale hunt. Within the last two years about one quarter of one of the whales that was caught was not sold or used in any way due to a dispute surrounding the catch. Surely, if the meat was necessary for human survival it would not have been left to rot.

It is interesting to hear the minister speak with such confidence about the manner in which the whales are killed in Bequia. Perhaps on that basis, the government will improve upon its reputation of not providing proper vital scientific information to the IWC about the method and numbers of our whale kills and strikes (a strike is when whale is harpooned but not landed).

In any case, the killing of whales in Bequia, in my opinion, does not constitute an aboriginal activity. It began in 1875 with Scottish William Wallace, who learned the practice from Yankee whaling ships. It began as such in the Colonial period and not with the indigenous Caribs or the Garifuna (most of who had been long exiled by that point).

The pro-whaling position of OECS countries and their support for Japan's killing of whales under the guise of "scientific research" has attracted the great disapproval of our Latin American neighbours. These countries are known as the "Buenos Aries" group and comprise Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, whale watching has become a popular tourism activity. Reports show that there are now 18 countries in the region that promote it, including Dominica. Whale watching brings tourists, foreign exchange and employment to our shores. Whale killing brings us a bad reputation.

Today there is very little aboriginal whaling around the world. The remaining true aborigines live in harsh conditions on ice caps. They are Chukots in Russia's Siberia and Inuits in Alaska. They do actually need to hunt whales to live. Definitely not so in Bequia.

It is past the time for us in St. Vincent & the Grenadines to stop the killing of humpback whales. But if whale hunting is to continue, the very least that the government should do is ensure that whale hunting is done in strictly regulated conditions and with the proper recording of data so that we do not further hurt our nation's reputation in the world community or our image as a tourism country.

It is time to embrace conservation. The value of whales to our economy is much greater if they are alive than dead. Our government should lead the way in promoting and incentivizing our whale watching industry. The rewards to our people in jobs, foreign exchange earnings and standing in the tourism industry are far greater than in killing whales.

CALENDAR

JULY

1	Public holiday in Antigua & Barbuda (Vere Cornwall Bird Sr. Day) and in the BVI (Territory Day)
1 - 8	Highland Spring HIHO 2011, BVI (windsurf and SUP). http://go-hiho.com
2	Public holiday in CARICOM countries (CARICOM Day), Curaçao (Flag Day) and Cayman Islands (Constitution Day)
3	FULL MOON
7	Junior Angler Tournament, Trinidad. http://ttgfa.com/events
7 - 8	Firecracker 500 Race, BVI. tel (284) 495-4559
8	Barbados Cruising Club Regatta. www.sailbarbados.com
9-10	Public holiday in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (Carnival)
10	Public holiday in the Bahamas (Independence Day)
14	Bequia Fishermen's Day Competition. www.bequiatourism.com
14	Bastille Day. Celebrations and boat races on French islands
14 - 15	KATS Premier's Cup, Tortola (IC-24 youth regatta). www.katsbvi.com
15	Bastille Day Kingfish Tournament, St. Thomas. Tel (340) 988-0854
16 - 1 Aug	Tobago Heritage Festival. http://tobagoheritagefestival.com
18 - 25	Calabash Festival, Montserrat. www.visitmontserrat.com
21	Cruzan Open One Design Regatta, St. Croix, USVI. SCYC, www.stcroixyc.com
22 - 29	Tobago Underwater Carnival. www.tobagounderwatercarnival.com
23 - 24	Quantum IC-24 International Regatta, BVI. RBVIYC, www.rbviyc.org
26 - 1 Aug	Canouan Carnival, Grenadines. cmclaurean@hotmail.com
26 - 7 Aug	Nevis Culturama (Carnival) www.nevisisland.com
27 – 29	Bonaire Heineken Jazz Festival. www.bonairejazz.com
27 – 12 Aug	BVI Emancipation Festival. www.bvitourism.com
28	Guy Eldridge Memorial Trophy Race, BVI. RBVIYC, www.rbviyc.org
28 - 7 Aug	Antigua Carnival. http://antiguacarnival.com
29 – 5 Aug	Tour des Yoles Rondes, Martinique. www.tourdesyoles.com
29 - 6 Aug	**Carriacou Regatta Festival.** ***See ad on page 13.***
30 - 2 Aug	BVI Billfish Tournament. www.beyc.com/index.php/bvi-billfish-tournament.html
TBA	Emancipation Day Regatta, St. Lucia. SLYC, www.stluciayachtclub.com

AUGUST

1	Public holiday in many places (Emancipation Day) and Jamaica (Independence Day)
1	Carriacou Children's Education Fund Annual Welcome Potluck Barbecue, Carriacou. ccefinfo@gmail.com
2	FULL MOON
3	Carriacou Children's Education Fund Annual Charity Auction, Carriacou. ccefinfo@gmail.com
3 - 4	Cudjoe Head Celebrations, Montserrat. visitmontserrat.com/Cudjoe_Head_Celebrations
4 - 5	Windward Fête, Lorient, St Barth's (boat races and fishing tournament)
5	Anguilla Pursuit Race, SMYC, www.smyc.com
6	Public holiday in Grenada (Emancipation Day), in Dominica and Anguilla (August Monday) and in Antigua & Barbuda (Carnival)
6 - 7	Public holiday in Antigua & Barbuda (Antigua Carnival)
6 - 8	Public holiday in the BVI (Festival)
6 - 13	Nevis Film Week. nfcnevis@live.com
7	Public holiday in Antigua & Barbuda and Grenada (Carnival) and in Nevis (Culturama Street Parade)
9 - 10	Public holidays in Anguilla (August Thursday and Constitution Day)
10 – 12	Rembrandt Regatta, Aruba. www.budgetmarine.com
10 - 12	Tarpon Tournament, Trinidad. http://ttgfa.com/events
11 - 21	Caribbean & International Food Fair, Nevis. tel (869) 469-3441
13 - 14	Grenada Carnival. www.grenadagrenadines.com
15	Public holiday in Haiti (Assumption Day)
19	Windward Cup Regatta, Carriacou. www.grenadagrenadines.com
31	Public holiday in Trinidad & Tobago (Independence Day)
31	FULL MOON (blue moon)
TBA	Marigot Bay Race, St. Lucia. www.stluciayachtclub.com
TBA	Carib Great Race (powerboats) from Trinidad to Tobago

All information was correct to the best of our knowledge at the time this issue of Compass went to press — but plans change, so please contact event organizers directly for confirmation. If you would like a nautical or tourism event listed FREE in our monthly calendar, please send the name and date(s) of the event and the name and contact information of the organizing body to sally@caribbeancompass.com

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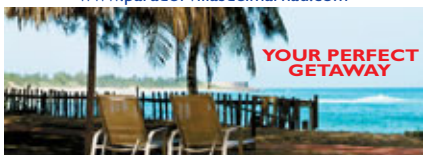
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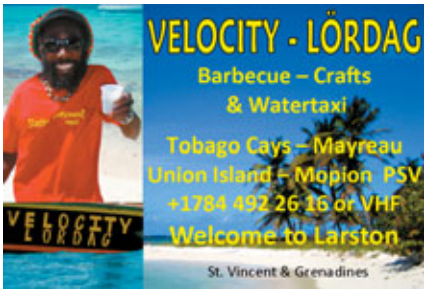
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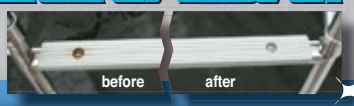
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Caribbean Rigging	C/W	15	Lesson Plan Ahoy	C/W	MP	Simoust Charters	St. Maarten	mp	Xanadu Marine	Venezuela	32
Carriacou Regatta	Grenada	13	LIAT	C/W	10	Slipway Restaurant	Grenada	MP	YES	Martinique	MP
Clippers Ship	Martinique	MP	Lucy Boat	Antigua	MP	Spice Island Marine	Grenada	47			
Curaçao Marine	Curaçao	21	Mango Bay	Martinique	MP	SpotlessStainless	USA	MP			
De Big Fish	Grenada	MP	Marc One Marine	Trinidad	MP	Squalls and Rainbows	C/W	MP			
Doolittle's Restaurant	St. Lucia	37	Marina Pescaderia	Puerto Rico	MP	St. Thomas Yacht Sales	St. Thomas	40			
Down Island Real Estate	Grenada	MP	Marina Santa Marta	Colombia	6	Sunbay Marina	Puerto Rico	5			
Doyle Offshore Sails	Tortola	4	Marina Zar-Par	Dominican Rep	32	Sunsail Marine Center	SVG	25			

MP = Market Place pages 42 to 45
CW = Caribbean-wide

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